FINAL

BLACKFOOT RIVER RECREATION MANAGEMENT DIRECTION

DECEMBER 2000

PREPARED BY:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

and

Members of the Technical Advisory Committee:
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Lolo National Forest
Helena National Forest
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Like the majority of outdoor recreation areas in the western United States, the Big Blackfoot River of Montana, is currently experiencing a relatively large influx of recreational use. It is felt that this growth of use on the river is primarily propelled by three scenarios: 1) An increase in human population in western Montana during the last two decades is causing an exponential increase in recreational use; 2) In 1994, movie theaters throughout the world presented "A River Runs Through It," a movie based on a true story which focused on the Blackfoot River. Predictably, this caused an increase in people coming to the Blackfoot River and its banks; 3) With the cooperative efforts by private interest groups and. governmental agencies, the fisheries in the river is making a remarkable comeback, and in turn there is a noticeable increase in anglers.

With this influx of recreational activity throughout the valley, it was sensed by local residents of the basin, recreational users, and governmental agencies that a management planning process was appropriate at this time. In keeping with the theme of cooperative efforts and partnerships established in the Blackfoot River Valley during the '90s, it was echoed that such a land planning process needs to include all interests from the beginning.

Such a plan needs to include the entire river from the headwaters to the mouth, with a recognition and awareness for the lifestyles and interests that exist within the valley. The planning process ~ for recreation use on the Blackfoot River must also include participation from all recreation management agencies. These include the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Montana Department of Natural Resources, the U.S. Department of Interior's Bureau of Land Management, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service.

With the initial guidance from Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) in 1995, other natural resource agencies, recreational users, and private landowners of the valley were called together in order to respond to the present and future impacts of recreational use on the Blackfoot River. In order to gain input from various interests, several procedures took place in 1995 that put forth a recreation management planning process. First, there was the establishment of a "Technical Advisory Committee" and a "Citizen Advisory Committee." A private planning consultant Was hired and in the summer of 1995 a series of public scoping meetings were held. With input received from the two committees and issues identified through seven scoping meetings, the consultant prepared several drafts of a Recreation Management Direction for the Blackfoot River. A final draft was presented to the public in January 1999. After public involvement, this final document was produced.

This Management Direction document will be used as a tool in the management process. The primary component and purpose of this document is to provide a guiding vision of the recreational settings and opportunities for seven defined sections ("Reaches") of the Blackfoot River. More specifically, this planning document includes the following parts: the history of human growth and recreational use on the river; the authority the state and federal agencies have

and do not have; past~ present and future planning processes; current land use practices; and recreation management issues. The affixed Appendix includes the following sections: an overview of past research which has provided data and insight on water quality~ water quantity~ wildlife, fisheries, and recreation; and the issues that need to be resolved by recreation managers.

With the FWP playing the lead role, the Recreation Management Direction proposes to create the Recreation Steering Committee (RecSteerCom). This citizen advisory group will help the sponsoring agencies address issues identified in this planning document. This document proposes "potential recreation management actions" which are to be confronted by this committee. The RecSteerCom will be composed of representatives from private landowners~ recreationists, commercial outfitters, and the general public. Some of the issues requiring early attention and a management response include the following: river access; facilities; commercial use; recreational use limitations; user fees; and gaining legal authority to administer suggested management practices.

Planning is an ongoing process and this Management Direction is only the beginning -- "a snapshot in time" -- in identifying and addressing key issues. With the recommendations and suggestions from the public and the RecSteerCom, the sponsoring agencies will take on each issue and bring them to a resolution. But, with the dynamics of time, amendments and addendums will be made to this document. Once this Management Direction has outlived its usefulness it will be time to do an updated version of another recreation planning document.

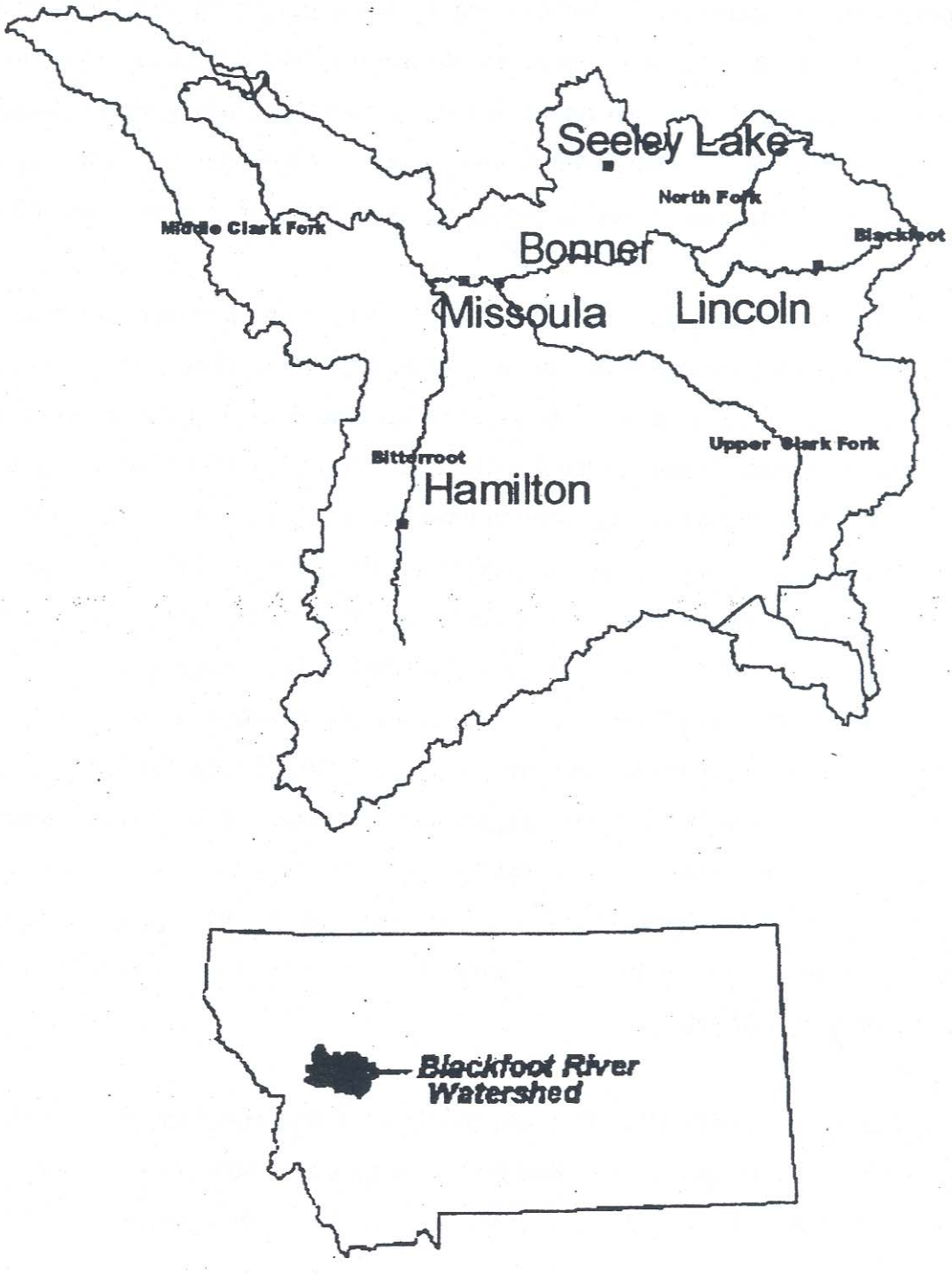
INTRODUCTION TO THE BLACKFOOT RIVER

Western Montana's Big Blackfoot River has become one of the State=s most popular and important recreational rivers. Its location near the population growth centers in western Montana, its natural setting and features, and the notoriety gained from the recent movie AA River Runs Through It," have all contributed to its popularity. Floating, fishing, camping, nature watching, and just plain Agetting away from it all" are included in the ever growing public uses of the Blackfoot. Montanans as well as tourists are counted among the many users of the Blackfoot.

The Blackfoot River is one of three major tributaries in Montana of the Clark's Fork of the Columbia River, the easternmost segment of the largest river system west of the Continental Divide. The 22,000 square mile Clark Fork drainage basin occupies most of western Montana. See Figure 1. A major portion of the Blackfoot River Basin was formed some 10,000 years ago through the action of glaciers originating in what is now known as the Bob Marshall Wilderness Area. The landscape today consists of 9,000 foot peaks in the headwaters along the Continental Divide, heavily forested slopes leading down to the valley, and rangelands, glacial potholes, and wetlands in the floor of the valley. The total Blackfoot River drainage basin is 2,320 square miles. The stream gradients throughout the 132 mile long Blackfoot River are somewhat unusual, being very steep in the headwaters area, much flatter throughout the upper and middle valley reaches, and then becoming steep again in the canyon of the lower river. Stream flows at the mouth vary from a maximum recorded flow of 19,200 cubic feet per second (cfs) on June 10, 1964, to the lowest recorded flow of 200 cfs on January 4 & 5, 1950. Low flows in the summer of 1988 approached and may have been below the recorded low flow. Annual average discharge near the mouth is 1,633 cfs.

Earliest users of the Blackfoot were the Native Americans of northwestern Montana, followed by the fur trappers who worked the area in the early 1800s. Commercial use of the river began in the 1860s when mining began in the upper reaches of the drainage. Later the river

FIGURE 1: UPPER CLARK FORK RIVER WATERSHED

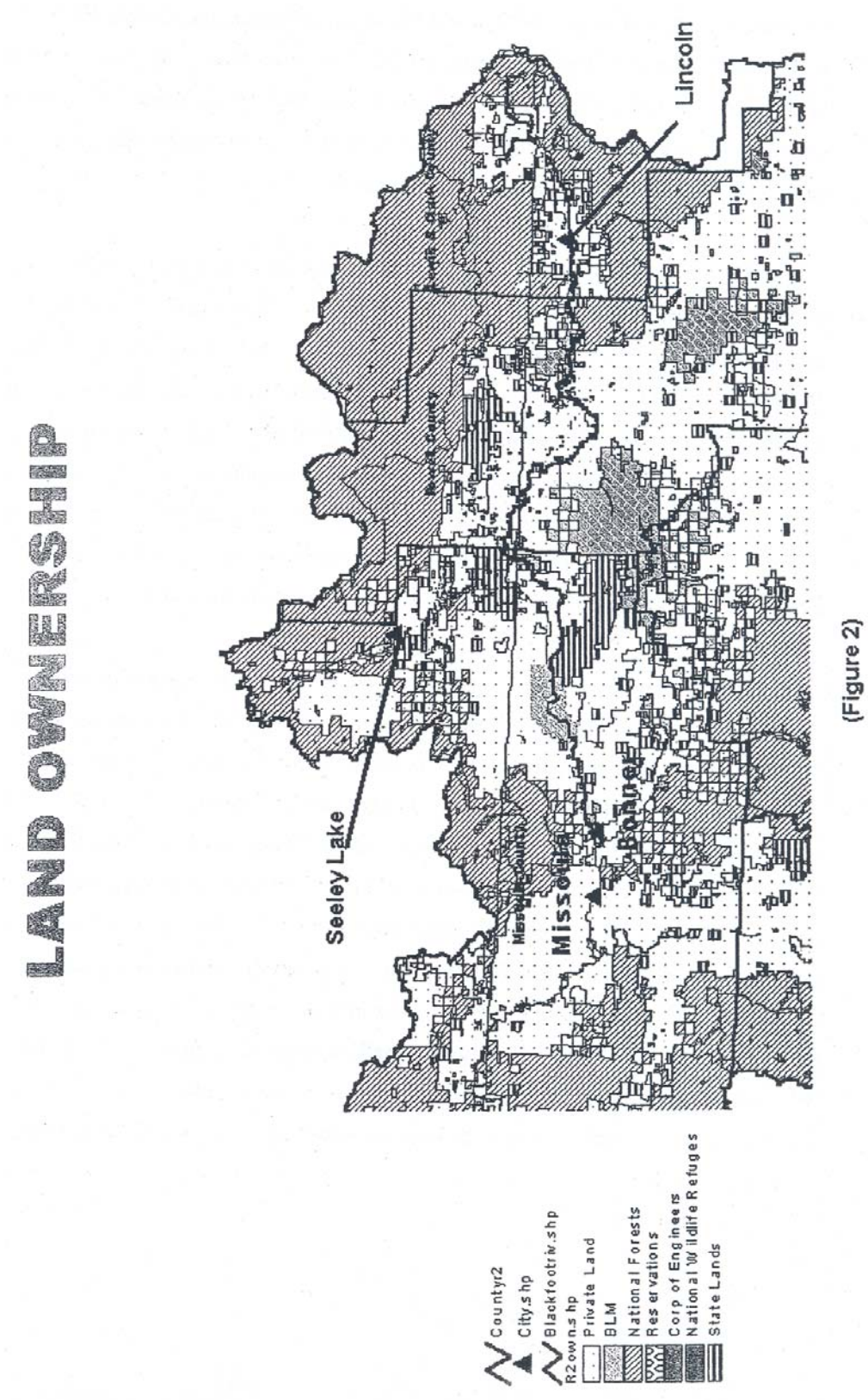


was used to float railroad ties and logs with log drives continuing into the late 1920s. Irrigation use of the Blackfoot=s waters began in the late 1800s and continues today in the middle reaches of the river in the Helmville, Ovando, Potomac and Nine Mile Prairie areas. Commercial recreation use of the river also began in the 1920s with the advent of guest ranches, one of which ranks among the oldest continuing guest ranches in the state.

Today, recreation ranks as one of the most important uses of the Blackfoot River. The majority of this use is non-commercial, but commercial use levels have also increased dramatically. Ranching continues in the middle reaches of the drainage and waters from the river continue to irrigate hayfields. The lower and upper reaches of the drainage have seen much growth in residential development, both for primary residences and recreational homes. Logging still continues on the uplands in the drainage on both private and public lands. Mining use in the upper river has continued to a limited degree over the years and currently a very large open pit mine is proposed in the Lincoln area. Backcountry recreation use occurs throughout the drainage, including the Bob Marshall and Scapegoat Wilderness areas to the northeast.

Lands within the Blackfoot River Basin are owned and managed by a variety of interests. Approximately 24% is held in private ownership as agricultural and non-industrial forest land. The other major landowners/managers in the basin include the Bureau of Land Management=s Garnet Resource Area (20%), the Lolo and Helena National Forests (44%), the State Lands Unit of the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (7%), and the Plum Creek Timber Company (5%). General ownership of lands within the basin are shown on Figure 2. Likewise, the basin lies in three different counties. The headwaters area is in Lewis and Clark County, the middle river in Powell County, and the lower river in Missoula County. County lines are also shown on Figure 2. Communities in the basin are generally small, with Lincoln, Seeley Lake and Bonner being the largest. Smaller communities include Ovando, Potomac and Helmville. The diversity of ownerships, interests, and political subdivisions within the basin presents a situation where coordinated efforts are needed to ensure balanced management of the resources of the basin.

FIGURE 2: LAND OWNERSHIP



(Figure 2)

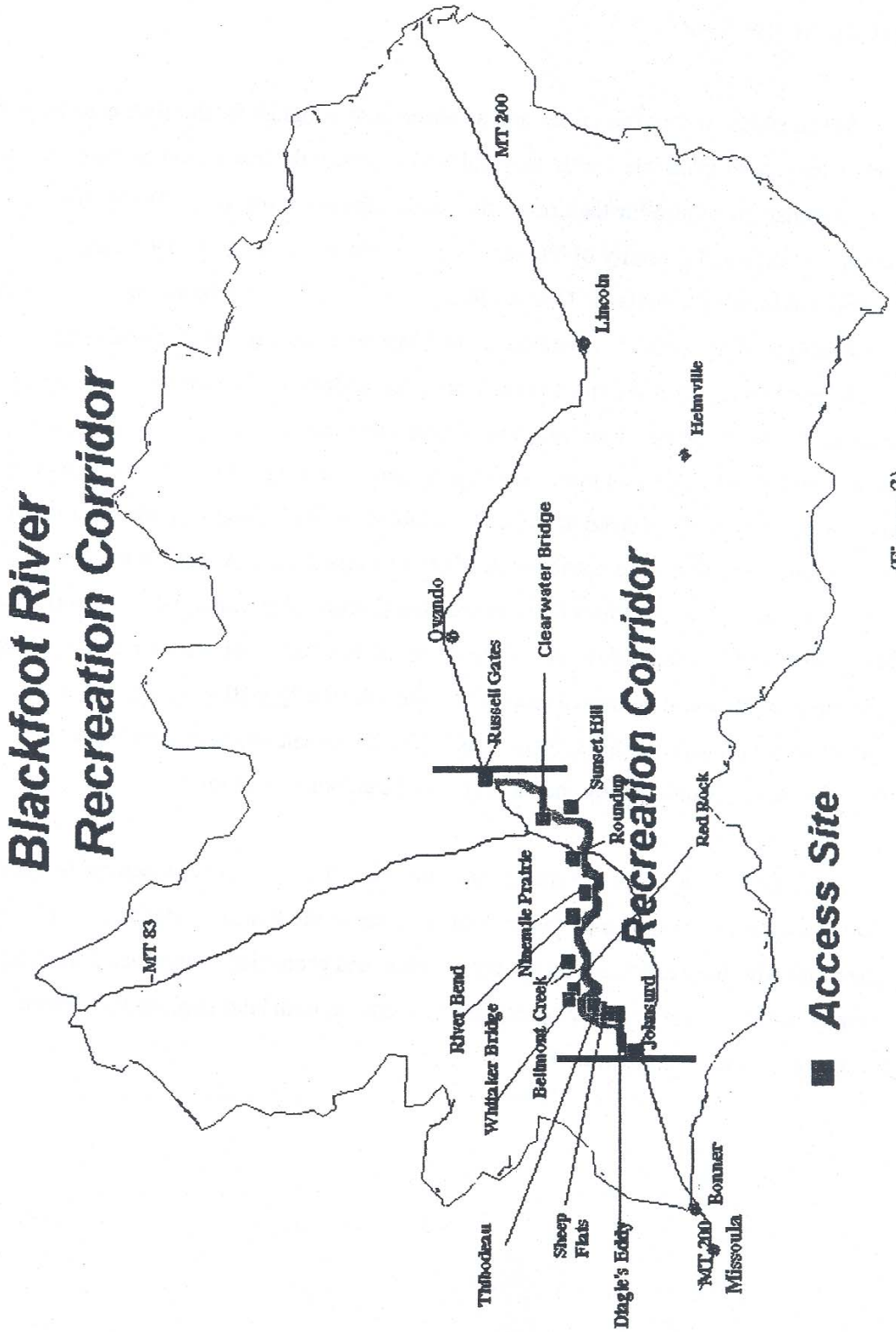
BACKGROUND TO THE MANAGEMENT PLANNING PROCESS

HISTORICAL REVIEW

Management of recreational use and a conservation program for the river corridor became a topic of discussion in the late 1960s. Several landowners in the lower river began efforts to develop a management plan for their respective lands adjacent to the river. The Nature Conservancy and The University of Montana became involved in the early 1970s and in 1973 the Department of Interior=s Bureau of Outdoor Recreation became a participant. In 1975, through the direct efforts of all the parties mentioned, the Montana State Legislature passed conservation easement legislation, which provided a mechanism for landowners to voluntarily place perpetual restrictions on the use of their land which would directly benefit the public. In addition, the group implemented a functional management program for 26 miles of mostly privately-owned river frontage, commonly referred to as the Blackfoot River Recreation Corridor, in June of 1976. The area included in the corridor extends from Russell Gates Access to Johnsrud Park, as shown on Figure 3. The Blackfoot River Recreation Corridor Agreement has been periodically updated and is still in effect today. All of the efforts of this early cooperative planning group were brought together and presented as a master plan entitled AThe Blackfoot River, a conservation and recreation management plan." This document was published in October of 1976 by The Nature Conservancy and the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation.

Since 1976, many planning studies and documents have been developed by the various public agencies who manage lands and/or recreation use in the Blackfoot drainage and by private organizations who have an interest in the preservation and protection of the Blackfoot drainage. A listing of some of these items by agency or organization, with brief explanations where pertinent is contained in Appendix A.

FIGURE 3: BLACKFOOT RIVER RECREATION CORRIDOR



(Figure 3)

Several of these studies are worthy of brief mention here. The 1976 study by Fish, Wildlife & Parks entitled ARecreational Use on the Lower Blackfoot River" first inventoried the public use and developed the first recreation management guidelines. This study was in part duplicated in 1991 and results published as ARecreational Use of the Blackfoot River Recreation Corridor." It developed current use estimates and compared them to the results of the 1976 study. Findings of this study probably were the primary factors leading to initiation of this Management Direction. Results of this study are more fully presented under Recreation Use discussed later in the document.

A number of fisheries studies were undertaken by FWP from 1988 to 1991 with funding assistance from the Big Blackfoot Chapter of Trout Unlimited and the Bureau of Land Management. In general trout populations were below expected levels while populations of native species appeared to be particularly jeopardized. These studies led to adoption of objectives and strategies by FWP which 1) would lead to more restrictive fishing regulations, and 2) would improve habitat where needed.

A 1990 report entitled AWater Quality Investigations in the Blackfoot River Drainage, Montana≅ reported the results of water quality monitoring and analysis of streamflow and runoff patterns. This study was done by the Water Quality Bureau of the Montana Department of Health and Environmental Sciences (now the Department of Environmental Quality) with partial funding from Trout Unlimited. This study was particularly valuable as it portrayed a comprehensive picture of water quality throughout the Blackfoot drainage. It found that the upper river had some serious problems resulting from runoff from old mining spoils, but that conditions had not changed from those found in the early '70s. The middle reaches of the river were found to have subtle problems from moderate nonpoint source pollution, while the lower river was in excellent health.

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

In 1994 the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP), the principal recreation manager of the Blackfoot River for the State of Montana, organized a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) made up of representatives from FWP, Bureau of Land Management, Lolo National Forest, Helena National Forest, Montana Department of Natural Resources & Conservation, and the Plum Creek Timber Company, to jointly coordinate their efforts within the drainage. Members of the Technical Advisory committee are as follows:

Fish, Wildlife & Parks:

Lee Bastian, Regional Parks Manager (Project Coordinator)
Gary (Woody) Baxter, Blackfoot Area Recreation Manager (Asst. Coordinator)
Dennis Workman, Regional Fisheries Manager
Jeff Erickson, Headquarters Recreation Planner

Lolo National Forest:

Bruce Johnson, Resource Management Assistant, Seeley Lake District

Helena National Forest:

Gilbert Zepeda, Lincoln District Ranger
Charlie Hester, Resource Management Assistant, Lincoln District

Department of Natural Resources & Conservation, State Forestry:

Steve Wallace, Clearwater Unit Manager
Curtis Gelderman, Headquarters Unit

Bureau of Land Management:

DeLon Potter, Recreation, Garnet Resource Area
Dick Fichtler, Recreation, Garnet Resource Area

Plum Creek Timber Company:

Bruce Schlaebitz, Seeley Lake office

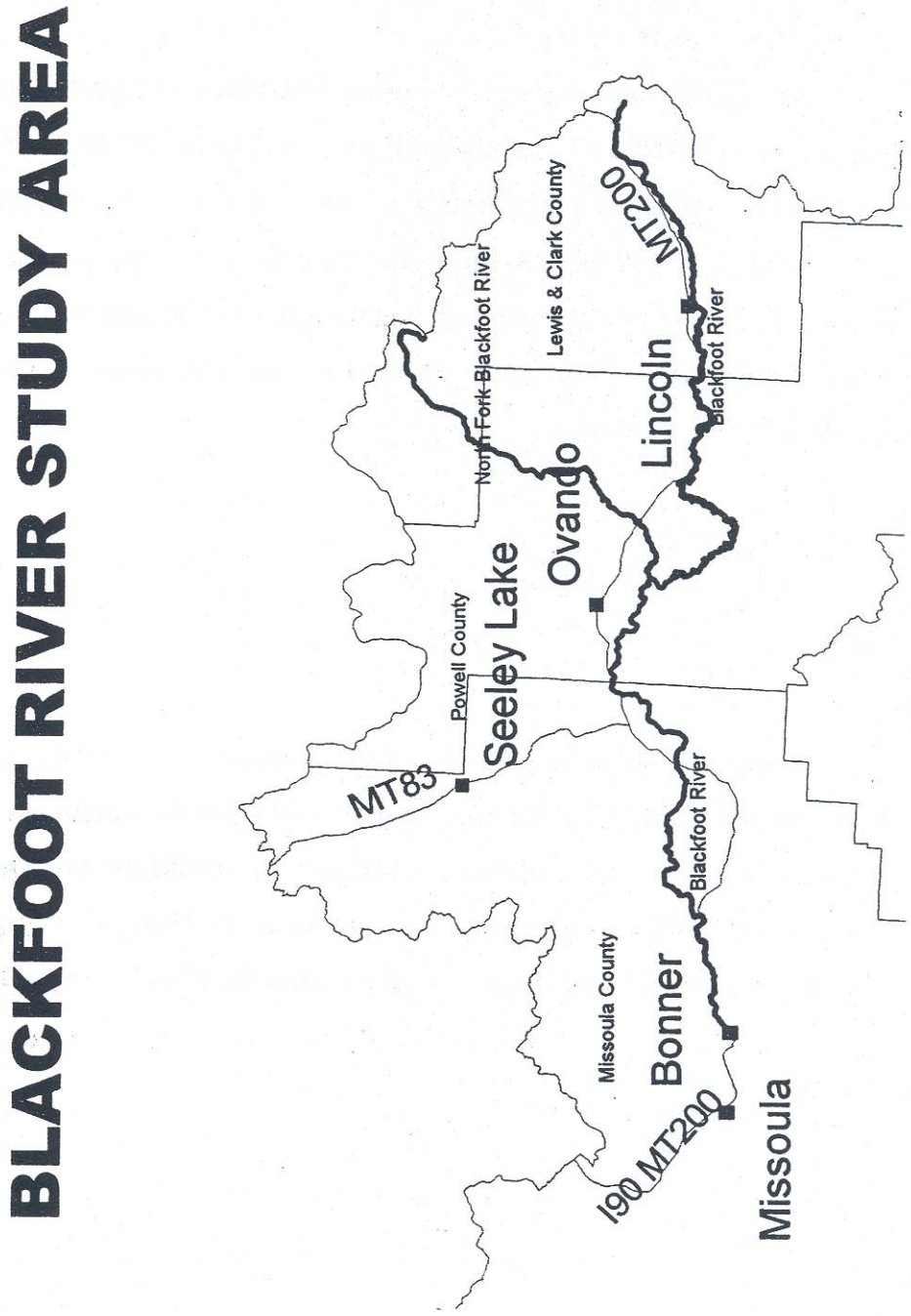
NEED FOR A MANAGEMENT DIRECTION

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) initially reported on their individual management programs for lands under their control in the Blackfoot drainage. TAC then addressed the various technical studies on the resources of the drainage along with thorough analysis of the recreational use study performed in 1991. After a great deal of review and discussion, TAC agreed that the time had come to develop a coordinated Management Direction to deal with recreational use and to ensure balanced management of the recreational resources of the Blackfoot River drainage.

STUDY AREA

The TAC Committee considered the geographic limits of this management planning document and decided that the area would extend from the mouth of the Blackfoot at Bonner to the headwaters above the community of Lincoln. It would also include the North Fork from its confluence with the main stem at River Junction to the North Fork Falls (Figure 4). In addition, this planning document would principally address the river corridor lands adjacent to the river.

FIGURE 4: BLACKFOOT RIVER STUDY AREA



MANAGEMENT DIRECTION STUDY

ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The Technical Advisory Committee was chaired by Lee Bastian, Regional Parks Manager for FWP. As chair he also has served as Project Coordinator for the development of this Management Direction document. He has been assisted by Woody Baxter, the Blackfoot Area Recreation Manager for FWP.

Once the decision had been made by the TAC Committee to move ahead with the Management Direction, a process was initiated to secure the services of a consultant to assist the Committee in the preparation of a Management Direction document. Joel Shouse of Bozeman, Montana, was retained and Mr. Shouse has worked closely with the Project Coordinator and Committee throughout the process of development of the Management Direction. Funding for the consultant has been provided by FWP and BLM.

CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

One of the first actions taken by the Technical Advisory Committee to involve the public in the planning process was the appointment of a Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). The role of the Committee has been to serve as a representative cross-section of the interested public and as such to review and advise the Technical Advisory Committee through out the planning process. The eleven members of the CAC and their area of interest are listed below:

Randy Mannix, Landowner	K.D. Feeback, Landowner
Roy O=Connor, Landowner	Land Lindbergh, Landowner
Deb Morvac, Commercial Outfitter	Mike Hillygus, Commercial Outfitter
Mark Gerlach, Trout Unlimited	Chuck Mazurek, Rafter
Bob Benson, Canoer	Becky Garland, Retailer

Dudley Improta, University Recreation Coordinator

SCOPING PROCESS

SCOPING MEETINGS

The Technical Advisory Committee and the Citizens Advisory Committee developed a program for a series of Scoping Meetings to be held throughout the Blackfoot drainage and in several neighboring communities where significant numbers of recreation users reside. The purpose of the meetings was to inform the public about the planning program, but more importantly to 1) receive input from the public concerning the issues of most concern to them, 2) evaluate the need for a Management Direction, and (3) clearly define the purpose of the Management Direction. Information concerning the location, schedule, and purpose of the meetings was made available to area newspapers and radio stations, ads were run in some newspapers, and notices were posted in the various offices of the Sponsoring Agencies.

Seven evening Scoping Meetings were held during July and August of 1995. Locations of the meetings were in Ovando, Potomac, Missoula, Seeley Lake, Lincoln, Great Falls and Helena. Attendees were given an informational handout which explained why the Technical Advisory Committee and the Citizen Advisory Committee felt that a management planning process was needed, the expected purpose for this Management Direction, sponsors of the Management Direction, and listed issues which had been previously identified. They were also given a questionnaire to complete. Copies of both of these documents are contained in Appendix B. Format for the meetings called for 1) explanation of the purpose of the meetings and the materials being handed out, 2) introduction of the members of the TAC and CAC, 3) explanation by the consultant of the process leading to development of a Plan, 4) time for statements and questions from the public, and 5) time for completion of the questionnaire. Attendees were asked to put their names and addresses on the questionnaire so that a mailing list could be assembled for subsequent distribution of information as the planning process progressed.

The Scoping Meetings were very well attended with over 170 individuals being present. Approximately 80 of the attendees completed and submitted the questionnaire. In addition, a recorder was present at each meeting and comments were noted on flip charts and posted on the walls as each meeting progressed. This encouraged other attendees to voice their support or opposition to what had been said as well as to make further comments. The written questionnaires and flip charts have been retained at FWP=s Regional Office in Missoula and are available for review. All input received was reviewed by the TAC and CAC and a condensed summary prepared. A copy of this summary is contained in Appendix C.

RESULTS OF THE SCOPING PROCESS

The major findings of the Scoping Process were as follows:

- Most Mentioned Issue – "Quality of the Physical Resource"
- Most Mentioned User Expectation – "Quality Outdoor Recreation Experience"
- Most Important Thing Which Could Be Done – "User Management/ Limits/Permits"
- Hope For The Future – "Resource Protected" followed by "Preserve The Quality of the Experience"

The Scoping Process also demonstrated to the TAC and CAC that a Management Direction for the Blackfoot drainage was supported by the majority of the public that participated and that a Management Direction was also necessary in order to deal with the competing interests in the Blackfoot.

PURPOSE OF THE MANAGEMENT DIRECTION DOCUMENT

The most mentioned AHope for the Future" of the Blackfoot River expressed at the Scoping Meetings was the AProtection of the Physical Resources≅ and the APreserving of the Quality of the Experience." Accordingly, FWP, the other Sponsoring Agencies, and the Citizens Advisory Committee have adopted the following APurpose Statement≅ for this Management Direction: **"To Protect the Natural Resources of the Blackfoot River and To Preserve the Quality of the Recreational Experience for Future Generations."**

MANAGEMENT APPROACH

The management approach used in developing this Management Direction has been based on the following:

- Identification of the major issues through the Public Scoping Process.
- Recognition of the public's "Goals for the Future of the Blackfoot."
- Understanding of the physical and biological condition of the river and its corridor from both historical knowledge and various technical studies reviewed.
- Recognition of the authority of various agencies through a variety of laws, agency rules and regulations, and policies available for management of the resource and recreational use.

The Management Direction for some individual issues has broken the river into reaches based upon such items as physical configuration, biological productivity, type of use, amount of use, nature of problems, etc., but also has established reaches based upon the ability and/or the authority of the Management Agencies to deal with the issues (Figure 6).

The issues are presented and discussed in the following sections more or less in the order of most frequently mentioned to the least frequently mentioned as determined from the Scoping Meeting Response Summary and have been combined where management abilities or limitations so dictate. Each issue concludes with a management strategy and an assignment of management responsibility to a sponsoring agency or entity.

Contained within the section entitled **MANAGEMENT AGENCIES** is a proposal to create a "Blackfoot River Recreation Steering Committee"to coordinate and facilitate the implementation of this Management Direction. This Committee has the potential to be perhaps the greatest product of this management planning process as the Committee will utilize the guidance and expertise of landowners, land managers, recreation managers, recreationists, special interest groups, local government, and the public in a forum where coordinated efforts

can be made to ensure balanced management of the recreational resources of the Blackfoot River drainage.

An alternative to implementation of this Management Direction is to take no action. By taking no action, this would result in continued deterioration of the resource, continued growth in unrestricted or undirected recreational use, and a diminished quality of the recreational experience.

MANAGEMENT AGENCIES

This Management Direction document has been developed under the auspices of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) made up of the major land owners/managers and recreation use managers within the Blackfoot River drainage. Specifically, it has included the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks, which is the official outdoor recreation management agency for the State of Montana, the Lolo and Helena National Forests and the Bureau of Land Management, who manage significant federal public lands within the drainage, the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (State Forestry), which manages significant state public lands in the drainage, and the Plum Creek Timber Company, the largest private landholder within the drainage.

The TAC Committee established the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) which is made up of recreational users, landowners, and business interests within the drainage. The TAC and CAC Committees have worked very closely to oversee and guide the development of this Management Plan. Although local government is not currently represented in this working group, they have been contacted throughout the study and are aware of the progress of the Management Plan.

The Management Direction proposes to create a Recreation Steering Committee (RecSteerCom) that will be designed to help advise the sponsoring land managing agencies on the issues identified in this document that need further analysis and discussion. This will be a small working group, of no more than 14 people, that will consist of representatives from private landowners, recreationists, commercial outfitters, and the general public. The RecSteerCom will initially meet monthly to address the management strategies outlined in this planning document and to find solutions to the issues identified in this Management Direction that still need detailed solutions. So-called special guests and specialists will be asked to attend meetings. Examples of these participants would be county planners, weed control agents, Plum Creek Timber Company,

additional recreationists and landowners.

The framework of the RecSteerCom will be as follows:

* Private Landowner - 4 people
* Commercial and Institutional Outfitter - 4 people
* General Public - 6 people

Throughout the Management Direction, the RecSteerCom is charged with specific tasks to address. In order to follow up on each and every task, a proposed master list has been created. It will be up to the RecSteerCom to prioritize and execute this list. Please refer to Appendix G.

Once the RecSteerCom can develop a host of "draft" options to an issue, review will be requested from various existing conservation groups, special management groups, interested parties, and the general public. The valley's cooperative resource management group, The Blackfoot Challenge, can be asked to facilitate public involvement.

A variety of parties are designated as Management Agencies (also referred to as the "Sponsoring Agencies") to implement the provisions of this Management Direction. The State and Federal agencies involved in managing lands or in regulating resources and land uses within the drainage are to ensure protection of the resources and preservation of the recreational experience. All of the members of RecSteerCom as well as the counties and local communities will be involved in this management planning.

MANAGEMENT STATEMENT FOR MANAGEMENT AGENCIES-

FWP will take the lead in organizing the "Blackfoot River Recreation Steering Committee" (RecSteerCom) and coordinate the management of recreational use on the Blackfoot. Cooperative Management Agreements will possibly be required between land management agencies in order to outline specific partnerships essential in managing recreation use and resource protection on the Blackfoot River. The identified Management Agencies will be

contacted by FWP and the provisions of this Management Direction made known to them as well as the RecSteerCom's desire for their cooperation and involvement in the implementation of this planning document.

LANDS AND LAND USES

The Blackfoot River Basin contains a total of 2,320 square miles of lands which are owned and managed by a variety of interests. The major landowners/managers include the U. S. Forest Service (Lolo and Helena National Forests), Bureau of Land Management, Plum Creek Timber Company, and the State of Montana. A generalized land ownership map is shown on Figure 2 on Page 4. The major land uses within the Blackfoot drainage include timber management, ranching, recreation, and mining.

As has been previously discussed in this Management Direction, the land uses within the Blackfoot drainage and the quality of these uses have a direct influence on the river and its tributaries. Some of these uses are influenced by regulations administered by other agencies, such as planning and zoning by local government, water quality regulations of the Montana Department of Environmental Quality, etc. Other uses can only be influenced through FWP and Sponsoring Agency communications and assistance to private landowners and other agencies. Still other uses of lands controlled by the Sponsoring Agencies can be cooperatively planned to minimize impacts on recreational use.

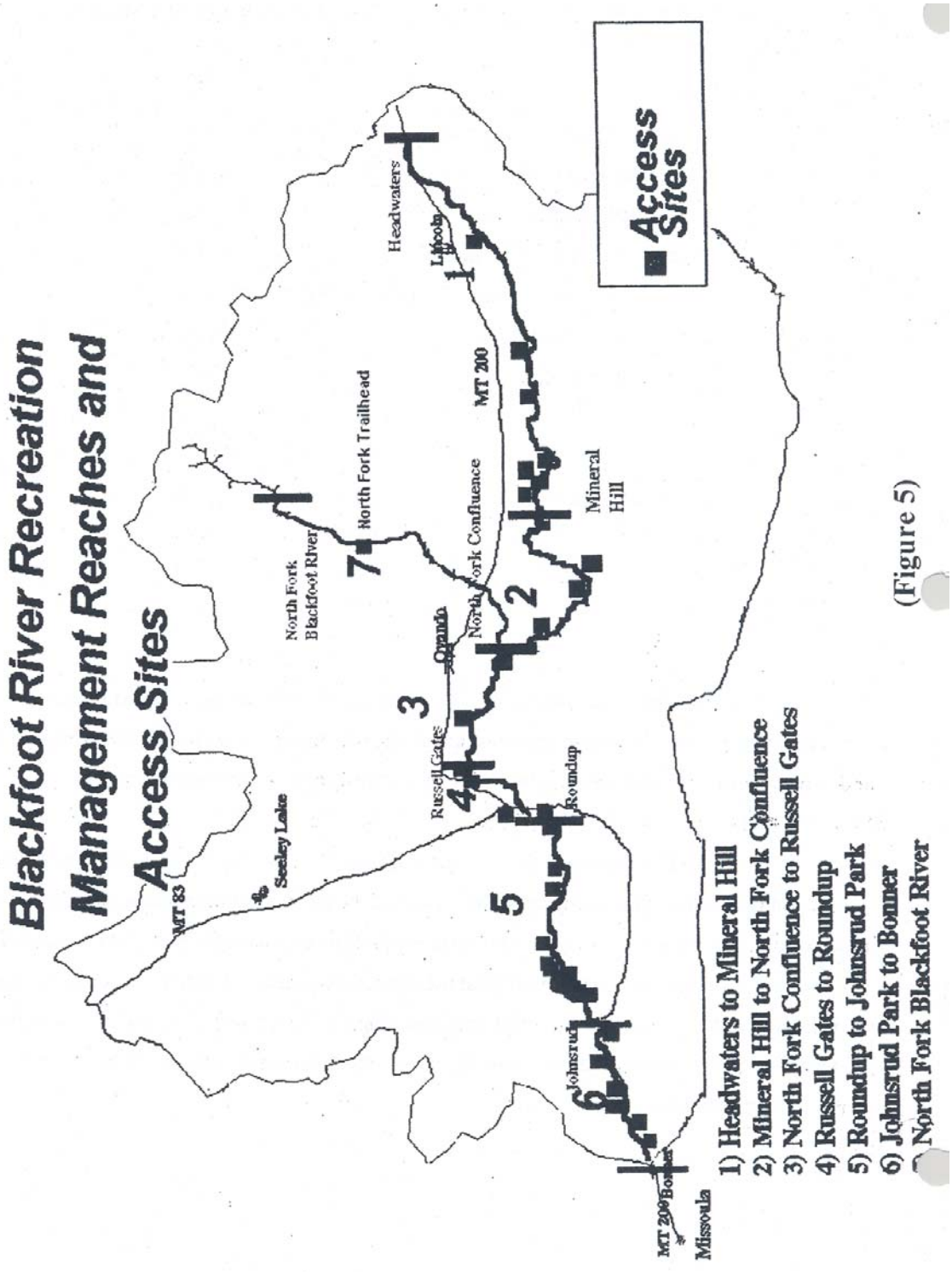
A major concern of this Management Direction are the land uses within the river corridor, adjacent to and/or visible from the river. These uses have the ability to influence the general aesthetics for the recreation users of the river. The following chart indicates the approximate percentage of ownership of riverfront lands throughout the study reach of the mainstem and the North Fork.

OWNER/MANAGER	% OF OWNERSHIP
Mainstem -	
Bureau of Land Management	17%
Lolo National Forest	8%
Helena National Forest	7%
Plum Creek Timber Company	1%
State of Montana (DNRC, U of M, & FWP)	14%
U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service	2%
Other Private Lands	51%
North Fork -	
Lolo National Forest	50%
Other Private Lands	50%

The following are existing land use management conditions. Maintaining these conditions is the proposed management objective defining the desired future Aappearance" of the river corridor based on reaches (See Figure 5 for map showing reaches).

Reach 1 - Headwaters to the Mineral Hill area. This area of the stream can be defined as a mountain stream with significant topographic relief and forested areas along the stream corridor. Use of the stream by recreationists is primarily by wading anglers, hikers, campers, etc. The seasonal low water levels limit boat use. Occasional views of cabins, roads, and bridges is present. Large commercial/industrial uses, dwellings lining the banks of the river, clearcuts, etc. are not present. Due to the terrain and vegetation, most developed land uses are hidden or blended into the landscape.

FIGURE 5: BLACKFOOT RIVER RECREATION MANAGEMENT REACHES AND ACCESS SITES



(Figure 5)

Reach 2 - Mineral Hill area to the North Fork Confluence. This is primarily an agricultural area with much of the stream bottom being lined with trees and other riparian vegetation. This is not a heavily used area and typical users are anglers and floaters who are looking for solitude, peace and quiet. Agricultural uses are common with reasonable setbacks from the stream for cultivated fields, livestock holding and/or feeding facilities, etc. Occasional ranch homes and structures are present, whereas small lot subdivisions and commercial/industrial uses are not.

Reach 3 - North Fork Confluence to Russell Gates. This reach of the stream includes semi-open ranch lands and timbered areas which are largely undeveloped. Stream banks are well defined with somewhat limited vistas visible from the stream. Use of the stream by recreationists is dominated by floaters as there are only two boat access points to the stream which are available to the public. Occasional views of cabins or dwellings and agricultural outbuildings are present. Commercial/industrial uses, subdivisions, etc. within the visual corridor as viewed from the river do not exist.

Reach 4 - Russell Gates to Roundup. This reach of the stream includes open ranch lands with some timbered areas. Stream banks are relatively low and open with large vistas visible from the stream. Use of the stream by recreationists is dominated by floaters, although there are some areas of the banks which are accessible to the public for fishing and swimming. Camping is limited to designated campgrounds. In places, a major state highway runs adjacent to the river and crosses it at the lower end of the reach. Occasional views of structures, roads, bridges, etc. do exist. Large commercial/industrial uses, subdivisions, etc. within the visual corridor as viewed from the river are not present. Due to the openness of the terrain, most developed land uses within close proximity to the river would be visible to floaters.

Reach 5 - Roundup to Johnsrud Park. This reach of the stream passes mostly through a timbered and somewhat narrow canyon. The steep walls of the canyon are very visible from the

river. A graveled road follows the river through the canyon, but due to the terrain and trees its presence does not dominate the viewshed from the river. Most users would classify this area as being fairly natural. Most recreational users of this reach are floaters but there are significant access sites for camping, swimming, fishing, etc. Camping is limited to designated campgrounds. Timber management is present in areas not readily visible from the river and some selective timber management exists in other areas. In the lower Ninemile Prairie area a few residential structures and accompanying outbuildings are visible from the river, whereas in the rest of this Reach, structures and other evidences of Acivilization≅ are not present.

Reach 6 - Johnsrud Park to Bonner. This reach of the stream passes through a large timbered canyon with a major state highway adjacent to most of the stream. There is significant residential development along the river and limited commercial development in some areas. Most recreational users of this area are floaters, but there are several access sites for camping, fishing, swimming, etc. Residential structures in treed areas are common in some places, whereas commercial/industrial uses are not as common. Only a few structures and other man-made features can be seen on the canyon walls, or are hidden from view.

Reach 7 - North Fork of the Blackfoot River (North Fork Falls to confluence with the Mainstem). The upper portion of the reach is entirely within the Lolo National Forest and is typified by a fairly deep forested canyon which was extensively burned over in the forest fires of 1988. A forest road follows the river to the trailhead, and then it is another 7 ½ miles to the North Fork Falls, which is the upper end of the reach. Between the forest boundary and the confluence with the mainstem, the North Fork passes through ranch lands with large amounts of timber in places and riparian vegetation in others. Occasional ranch dwellings and outbuildings are found along the stream. Use of this reach is typified by wading anglers, picnickers, and campers in the forest, while the area below the forest boundary is used by wading anglers. An occasional floater is seen during periods of higher water. Access is via road crossing for the most part with one defined fishing access site a few miles above the confluence. Occasional views of dwellings, roads, bridges, etc. are present. Commercial/industrial uses, subdivisions

along the banks, etc. do not exist. Due to the terrain and vegetation, most developed land uses can be hidden or blended into the landscape except in some areas in the lower portions of the reach.

The following areas are identified as viewsheds within the river corridor: the immediate stream banks, canyon walls, and ridge tops on the skyline. The stream banks and canyon walls are the more critical components of the viewshed. Local planning or land use authorities as well as Sponsoring Agencies who manage lands within the basin need to be made aware of the importance of these areas and encouraged to incorporate provisions to protect these areas in their land use plans and/or management documents.

The three counties within the Blackfoot drainage have developed a County Comprehensive Plan. Missoula County land use recommendations in the river corridor range from one dwelling per five acres to one dwelling per forty acres (Appendix H). Development potential is limited by availability of water, adequate septic system placement (requiring County permit), access, and slope on those lands limited to one dwelling per five and ten acres. In cases where one dwelling unit per forty acres is allowed, the preservation of agricultural, forestry and recreational activities are encouraged. Missoula County has also incorporated riparian resource area standards into the County Subdivision Regulations. The intent of the regulations is to protect riparian areas as viable habitats, flood storage areas, and stream bank stabilizers. Missoula County has mapping which depicts where subdivision and other land division have occurred along the corridor. In addition, the Missoula Office of Planning and Grants has mapped all conservation easements that are within the Blackfoot River corridor (Appendix H).

Powell County has recently completed and adopted (11/96) a County Comprehensive Plan and is currently working on regulations to implement the Plan. Powell County has also declared a moratorium on subdivisions within the Blackfoot drainage.

Lewis and Clark County has completed a Comprehensive Plan for the Lincoln area and

this Plan was adopted in 1996. Lewis and Clark County has a restriction for development of 100 feet from the river's high water mark.

Some of the lands in the Blackfoot drainage are currently protected by Conservation Easements. This is an excellent voluntary conservation tool as it enables critical resources to be protected and can provide financial incentives to landowners through tax deductions. When available, Sponsoring Agencies will provide information on conservation easements to the RecSteerCom, general public and interested landowners and efforts will be made to encourage the granting of easements by the Sponsoring Agencies.

The TAC Committee has decided that it is not necessary at the present time to pursue the possibilities of using management techniques being used in the present Blackfoot River Recreation Corridor (Russell Gates to Johnsrud Park) to other reaches of the river. The RecSteerCom will annually review the situation and the need and if warranted consideration will be given to extending the management techniques of the Corridor in the future.

MANAGEMENT STATEMENT FOR LAND USE -

When applicable, Sponsoring Agencies and the RecSteerCom will focus on protection of a stream corridor along the Blackfoot River. The principal objectives are 1) protection of the viewshed from the river, and 2) a setback from the river for structures and other manmade improvements. The following tools could be utilized to achieve the objectives:

- Long term protection will be sought:
    - *In land use plans prepared by the Counties;
    - *In the land management plans of the Sponsoring Agencies; and
    - *Through promotion of voluntary conservation tools such as conservation easements, land exchanges, land purchases, leases, and donations.

- FWP will request that its name be placed on County notification lists for projects being proposed on private lands which are within the river corridor.

- FWP will communicate, and provide assistance to private landowners, if requested, as they utilize their lands.

- RecSteerCom, along with Sponsoring Agencies, will annually review the Blackfoot River Recreation Corridor Agreement and evaluate the need to extend the areas included elsewhere on the river.

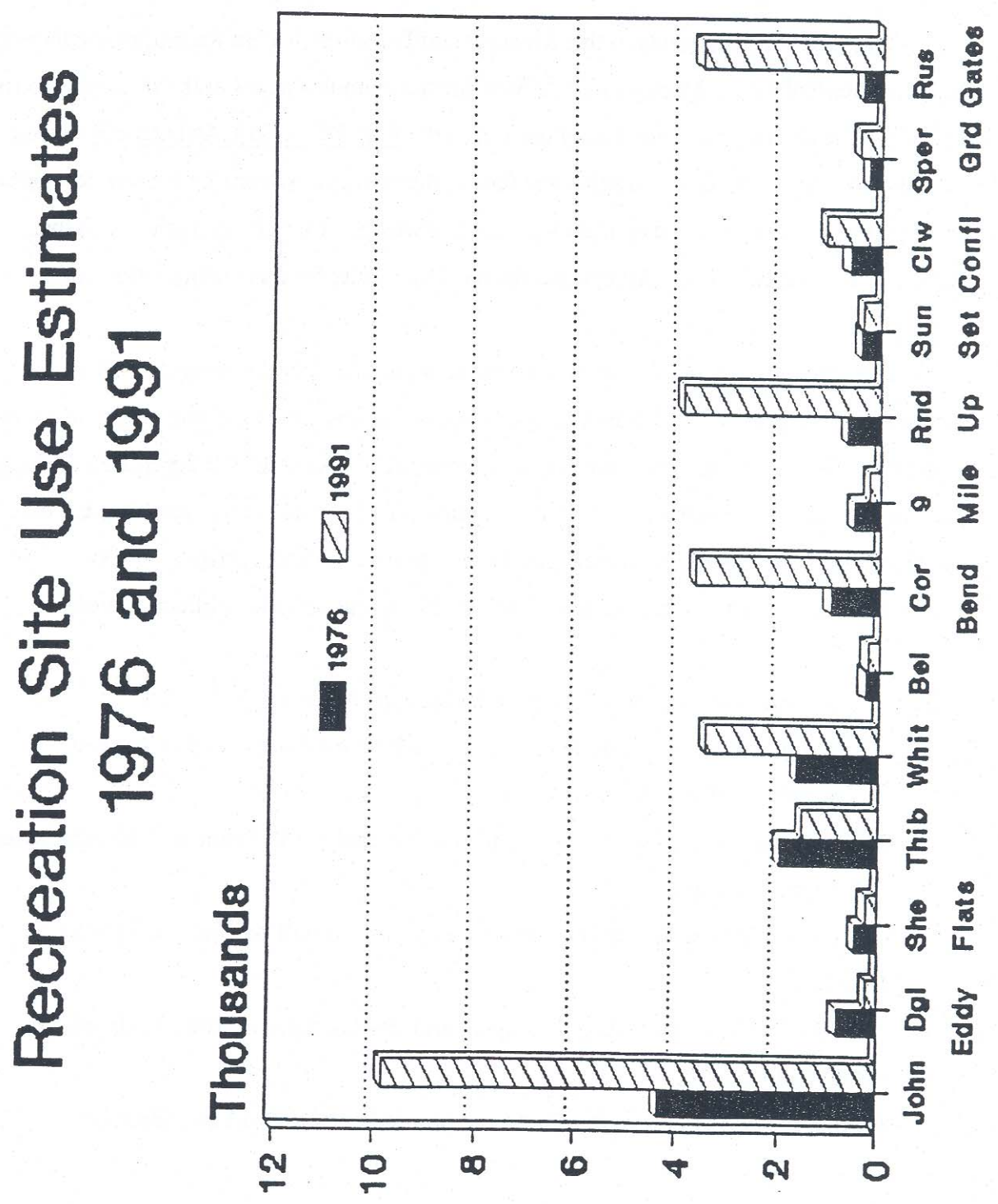
RECREATION USE

GENERAL

FWP is the "designated" outdoor recreation management agency for the State of Montana. As such it is the lead agency in the development of this Management Direction for the Blackfoot River drainage. Through the approval of the FWP Commission, the department has the authority to manage, establish rules and regulations, enforce, and promote recreational pursuits including such diverse activities as fishing, hunting, boating, snowmobiling, camping, wildlife watching, and state parks. In many cases it has the authority to manage all aspects of a particular activity, such as hunting big game; however, in other cases its authority is very limited, such as regulating numbers of floaters on a stream. Other Sponsoring Agencies, particularly the Federal Land Managers, do have more complete authority. Therefore, the management of recreation use is complicated and requires cooperation between the various agencies, and in some areas requires new legislation in order to deal with specific problems.

The types of recreational use and the capacity for use vary dramatically from the headwaters of the Blackfoot to its mouth. The 1991 Recreational User Survey found that within the Blackfoot River Recreation Corridor (Russell Gates to Johnsrud Park) the numbers of users were somewhat the same throughout the Corridor, except at Johnsrud Park where total users were approximately triple the other major sites. This contrasted with the 1976 user survey which found that use increased in a downstream direction with use again peaking at Johnsrud Park. Key sites, which include Whitaker Bridge, Corrick River Bend, Roundup and Russell Gates Fishing Access Sites, saw dramatic increases in use over the 15 year period. The bar graph on the following page (Figure II in the 1991 Survey) shows the contrast in the use estimates for these two surveys. Russell Gates is at the far right on the graph and Johnsrud Park is at the far left. This change in use suggests that numbers in the lower reaches are reaching levels which are too high and are causing users to choose to use other areas of the river.

FIGURE 6: RECREATION SITE USE ESTIMATES 1976 and 1991



The following segments of this Management Direction discuss Recreation Settings and Opportunities and future Management Actions for the various reaches of the river (this starts on page 31). The reaches were previously defined in the **LANDS AND LAND USES** chapter. Recreation Settings and Opportunities and future Management Actions have been developed by the recreation managers based on their personal knowledge of the river coupled with their analysis of the recreation use surveys and the scoping results for this planning document.

The stated "potential recreation management actions" found in Appendix K in this document are suggestions which will be addressed by the RecSteerCom and other members of the public. The suggested improvements at the existing access sites will depend on the long-term suitability of the sites based on the recommendations from the managing agencies and the RecSteerCom. Upon any improvements of the access sites the appropriate agency(ies) will conduct the required environmental assessments; this would include public involvement.

Objectives common to all reaches of the river include the following:

- The continuation of present restrictions which prohibit the use of motorized water craft on all reaches of the river.
- Development of a common signing plan to be used by all Agencies. (RecSteerCom will pursue this matter.)
- Earnest landowner-recreation manager relationships will be continued and/or established.
- Periodic monitoring for illegal camping and trespassing on private lands will be managed by FWP.
- Further methods to prevent poor sanitation predicaments will be addressed.

RECREATION SETTINGS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR EACH "REACH"

REACH 1. Headwaters to Mineral Hill Area:

Recreation Setting, Opportunities and Guidelines:

-Maintain undeveloped/primitive character of river corridor

*Discourage commercial floating

*No management of "sweepers" or log jams

-This reach should provide designated access sites, both for wading anglers, swimming, and small amounts of water craft use.

*The establishment of a designated/developed access site in the vicinity of the Lincoln townsite is a high priority.

*Most access should facilitate the wading angler and wildlife viewing (rather than for boat access, due to low water flows).

*Developed campgrounds should be relatively small and infrequent.

*Minimal recreational facility development.

-Public lands in this reach should be retained and efforts made to acquire private river frontage if the opportunity arises. The acquiring of private lands to public ownership should be conducted in order to provide natural resource protection.

REACH 2. Mineral Hill Area to North Fork Confluence:

Recreation Setting, Opportunities and Guidelines:

-This reach should maintain its long distance between access sites, and its "agricultural or rural atmosphere."

*No additional access areas to the river.

*Do not pursue new access on private property.

*Natural log jams should not be altered by humans.

*No developed campsites.

-Improve the existing recreation access sites when indicators signify the need.

REACH 3. North Fork Confluence to Russell Gates ("County Line"):

Recreation Setting, Opportunities and Guidelines:

-This reach needs to be managed for floating access where fishing is a major activity while floating.

-Manage to maintain undeveloped character of corridor

-Developed camping will be available only at the beginning and end of this reach.

-For floating recreationists, primitive camping opportunities will be explored.

-No additional river access sites should be provided, although FWP will continue to explore the situation at the Scotty Brown Bridge access.

REACH 4. Russell Gates to Roundup:

Recreation Setting, Opportunities and Guidelines:

-This reach should provide access for float trips, wading angling, and wildlife viewing.
-The only developed camping on this Reach will continue at Russell Gates Fishing Access Site.
-No additional access sites should be pursued or developed.

REACH 5. Roundup to Johnsrud Park:

Recreation Setting, Opportunities and Guidelines:

-This reach needs to maintain easy access for float trips, wading anglers, camping, sunbathing, swimming and wildlife viewing, along with a possible hiking/bicycle/horse trail on the old Milwaukee Railroad roadbed.
-No additional river access.
-Floating recreationists primitive camping opportunities will be explored.
-The corridor road needs initial reconstruction and, in the future, routine maintenance.
-New road design and construction will continue at several of the existing access sites.

REACH 6. Johnsrud Park to Bonner:

Recreation Setting, Opportunities and Guidelines:

-This reach needs to maintain easy access for float trips, wading angling, camping, sunbathing, swimming, and wildlife viewing.
-Developed camping should be limited to Johnsrud Park in this reach.
-A few of the existing "unofficial" river access sites need to be regulated and/or closed off.
-Some of the current sites need to be designated as "Access Sites" and receive routine maintenance and enforcement.

REACH 7. North Fork of the Blackfoot River (North Fork Falls to Confluence with the Main)

Recreation Setting, Opportunities and Guidelines:

-From the North Fork Falls downstream to the Bob Marshall Wilderness Boundary this area should maintain management practices that are outlined in the current Bob Marshall Wilderness Area Complex Management Plan. Use numbers are described as limited in this Plan via a Limits of Acceptable Change model. Biological indicators may show in the future a need for wading angler restrictions in the areas on the North Fork where Harlequin ducks have been observed nesting and/or the ducks' optimum habitat.

-From USFS trailhead to the confluence with the mainstream, this area needs to maintain the comparatively low amount of river access sites.

*No additional access sites should be pursued.

*Log jams should not be altered by humans.

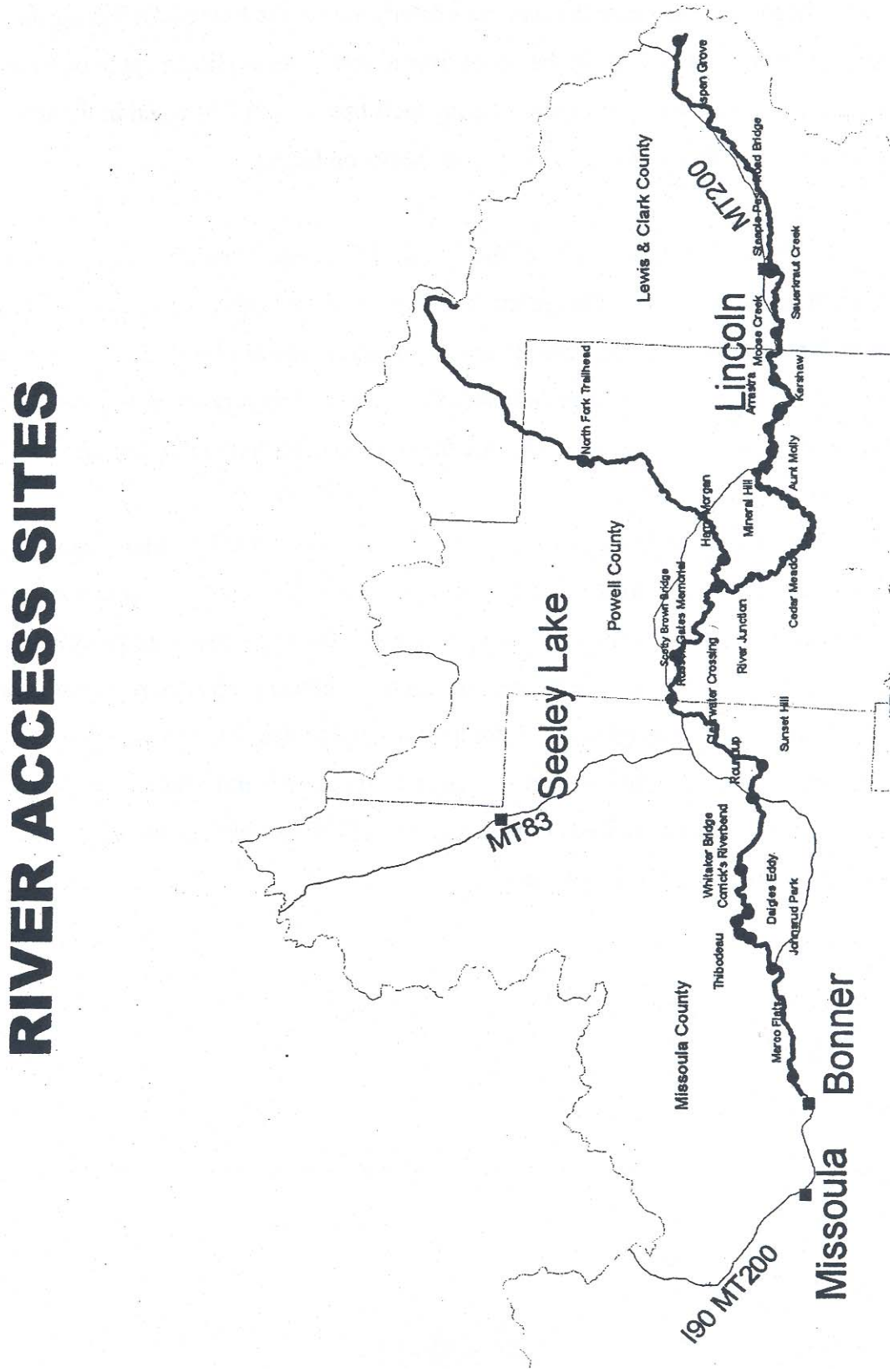
ACCESS

In general, access to the river was determined in the Recreation Management Objectives above to be adequate except in the upper river above Mineral Hill and at Scotty Brown Bridge. Designated current access sites and existing facilities are listed by reach in the table contained in Appendix F. Their general location is also shown on Figure 6.

Some users felt that a few of the "unofficial accesses" used by locals in the Lincoln area should be made "official." This refers to locations where bridges cross the river and provide a means for the public to access the stream. Downstream from Lincoln in the so-called "Blackfoot Canyon" area, a number of users indicated that they have to park along Highway 200 at locations where the highway right-of-way adjoined the river in order to fish the stream.

During the last five years, many users have contacted FWP offices stating that the Scotty Brown access issue for floaters needs to be addressed. Historically floaters accessed the river at this location. In many instances, floating access has blatantly gone onto private lands adjacent to bridge. In the mid '90s, Powell County replaced the bridge across the river with the adjoining landowners providing a right-of-way for the road and bridge, but not for stream access or recreational use. Some floaters feel strongly that if access is not available at Scotty Brown, then another access in that area needs to be developed. FWP is seeking a solution either at Scotty Brown Bridge or in another location.

FIGURE 7: RIVER ACCESS SITES



ACCESS - MANAGEMENT STATEMENT -

The Sponsoring Agencies and the Citizen Advisory Committee have developed a suggested priority list for implementing the changes, improvements, and additional accesses itemized by Reach. These suggestions can be found in Appendix K (Potential Recreation Management Actions). The RecSteerCom will advise the land managing agencies of the long-term suitability of the listed river access sites based on their entire river corridor recreation management recommendations.

Specific access sites to be addressed are listed as follows:

- FWP and the Sponsoring Agencies could seek to improve the access situation in the Lincoln area downstream to the Mineral Hill area. This may simply involve making Aofficial," current "unofficial" access locations.

- FWP and RecSteerCom will continue to seek a solution to the Scotty Brown Bridge access, either at this location or at a substitute location.

- Several of the Potential Recreation Management Actions (Appendix K) address changes or even elimination of some access sites; the RecSteerCom and FWP will address these areas during the planning process.

FACILITIES

A list of the existing public recreation facilities available can be found in Appendix F. The Potential Recreation Management Actions addressed in Appendix K, include a request for improvement or changes to existing accesses, rules regarding use or areas of use, addition of facilities, and removal of facilities. The Sponsoring Agencies and the Citizens Advisory Committee have examined these requests and developed a list of specific proposed management actions for facilities (Appendix K).

FACILTIES - MANAGEMENT STATEMENT -

- The Sponsoring Agencies and the Citizen Advisory Committee have developed a suggested priority list for implementing the changes, improvements, and additional facilities itemized by "Reach" in Appendix K. The RecSteerCom will advise the land managing agencies on the long- term suitability of the listed facilities based on their entire river corridor recreation management recommendations.

-Periodically, surveys and monitoring will be done by FWP and Sponsoring Agencies to reassess facility needs.

COMMERCIAL USE

Besides the recent influx of commercial fishing outfitters on the Blackfoot, another major concern has been identified regarding individuals or businesses who "for pay" take people down the Blackfoot River on recreational floats, for "whitewater/scenic trips" (i.e., no fishing). By law these commercial users are not designated as outfitters by the State of Montana and, therefore, are not regulated, licensed or restricted in any way. An outfitter in Montana by the state's definition is limited to those who take people hunting or fishing. Licensing authority of hunting and fishing outfitters is a function of the Board of Outfitters. Questions have been raised concerning safety issues, regulation of use, numbers of users, and areas of use, and that these commercial recreational users (non-fishing) do not financially support the management of recreational use of the Blackfoot.

FWP and other Sponsoring Agencies have authority to control commercial use on public lands managed by their respective agencies. This authority for FWP only includes the ability to regulate commercial users that utilize Fishing Access Sites or other Department lands.

During the summer of 1998, FWP conducted a statewide effort to register all river oriented commercial use. This included both fishing and non-fishing outfitters. The primary purpose of assembling this information is to determine how much and what type of commercial use is taking place on the Department's Fishing Access Sites.

The U.S. Forest Service definition of a commercial user includes providing services for assistance "such as supervision, protection, education, training, packing, touring, interpretation or other assistance to other individuals or groups in their pursuit of a natural resource based outdoor activity" for pecuniary remuneration or their gain.

This Management Direction proposes to broaden the definition of outfitter to include all commercial users of the river. This change in definition could be sought for the Blackfoot River. Nonprofit or institutional outfitters who take groups down the river with no fee being charged must also be included. At some point in the future, the sheer number of outfitted users may increase to where limits will have to be imposed.

COMMERCIAL USE - NEEDS, CONSTRAINTS AND GUIDELINES -

On BLM lands, Special Recreation Permits are required for commercial recreation use of public lands and related waters except when a use or event begins and ends on non-public lands or related waters, or traverses less than one mile of public lands or one mile of shoreline.

In general, outfitting/guiding permits are required for any commercial use of all National Forest Lands. Currently, on USFS lands, there is a moratorium on new commercial use in the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex which has been in place since 1978. The only way that new outfitter/guides can operate in the complex is if they purchase an existing outfitter/guide business which has been operating in the complex. Outside the Wilderness, the moratorium is not in place. However, the stretch of the North Fork of the Blackfoot River included in the document is very accessible, as shown by the number of private anglers that enter this area. It has been the Seeley Lake Ranger District's policy that outfitters are not needed here because of the accessibility. Therefore, the District has denied all new requests for fishing outfitting on the North Fork of the Blackfoot.

FWP is currently updating Acommercial use" policies and use data for the Fishing Access Sites (FAS) they manage.

On all state school trust lands which are managed by the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC), a Special Recreational Use License is required for all commercial use. More specifically, this license is needed for commercial activities (such as outfitting), and/or concentrated recreational activities conducted by organizations or other groups. These licenses are available only from DNRC offices.

The following outline describes the **process** in which recreational "commercial use" will be addressed by the managing agencies and the RecSteerCom.

*1) Agencies will measure current commercial recreation use levels.

Include:

- use of all public lands, river access sites, and roadways
- use of access on private lands (estimates)
- use on the river
- all types of commercial recreation use (i.e., fishing, scenic/white water, vehicle shuttle services, eco-tours, guest ranches, non-profit and institutional)

Methodology:

- FWP will require registration of all commercial use of all (FWP) Fishing Access Sites on the Blackfoot.
- USFS, BLM, DNRC and Plum Creek Timber Company will provide data for any existing outfitter/guide use in the Blackfoot River corridor.
- All agencies will be responsible for calculating commercial use on the lands they manage, and in turn release this information to FWP for coordination with the RecSteerCom.

***(Please note: A Cooperative Management Agreement (CMA) will be the vehicle in order to obtain the steps stated in 1)**

2) RecSteerCom will recommend appropriate and measurable indicators.

3) The Sponsoring Agencies will establish appropriate and measurable indicators

4) For each indicator, a standard will be set. This standard will be a condition that alerts management that a change in the quality of the Blackfoot River corridor is about to occur.

Through public involvement and recommendations from the RecSteerCom, the Sponsoring Agencies will ascertain specific management actions in order to prevent a change. Serious attempts will be made to include and involve both commercial and non-commercial public in this part of the process.

5) If required, Sponsoring Agencies will seek the proper authority needed to implement management practices to regulate (e.g. limit, charge fee) commercial recreational use on the Blackfoot River. This authority will preferably address all types of commercial recreation use (i.e., fishing, scenic/whitewater floating, vehicle shuttle service, eco-tours, guest, ranches, non-profit and institutional).

6) USFS will continue current moratorium on issuing any new outfitting/guides licenses. For the North Fork located in the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex, any future changes in current commercial use will be governed by the Bob Marshall Limits of Acceptable Use Plan. Through a CMA Commercial use, additions on Forest Service lands outside of the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex will be coordinated through standards set by the Blackfoot RecSteerCom and the USFS.

7) BLM will issue the agency's "Special Use Fees" for commercial recreation with their existing guidelines.

8) FWP and the Sponsoring Agencies will form partnerships through agreements, such as a CMA, in order that the entire river can manage commercial use in a cooperative interagency format.

NUMBER OF USERS

During the Scoping Meetings it was indicated that it may be time to limit numbers of users and/or size of groups in certain areas. Johnsrud Park access site was frequently mentioned as simply having too many people on many weekend days and that many of the smaller access sites on occasion are totally taken over by large groups. In other cases, it was suggested that the numbers of floaters were too many in certain areas and conflicted with other uses, such as fishing or perhaps another type of floating. Whether the time to establish limits is truly here or not may be subject to debate, but most users and managers feel that it will definitely arrive at some time in the not too distant future if the trend of increased recreation use continues on the Blackfoot and, therefore, needs to be addressed in this Management Direction.

FWP has limited authority to regulate the numbers of recreation users on the Blackfoot. Until 1999, the authority FWP had was related to the protection of private property and the resource and public safety and health. The specific authority to regulate numbers of users in order to reduce social conflict was unsuccessfully sought in the 1995 and 1997 sessions of the Legislature. During the 1999 State Legislative session, the FWP Commissioners were given authority to address social conflicts on Montana=s lakes, reservoirs and streams. Another possibility of a method to address recreation user numbers is a specific bill to give FWP additional authority for the Blackfoot River alone. This is an action that was taken by the Legislature for the Smith River. At a minimum, the authority to establish limits to protect private property, safety and health can be considered.

NUMBER OF USERS - NEEDS, CONSTRAINTS, GUIDELINES AND DEFINITIONS -

Recreational capacity is the area's capability to support floating, camping and day-use activities. When managing carrying capacity the managing agencies seek to balance the following definitions:

Resource (or physical) carrying capacity refers to the amount of use that can occur before the natural, physical resources in the river's corridor begin to deteriorate.

Facility carrying capacity refers to the actual amount of physical space available for recreational use in the Blackfoot River corridor. This space refers to such entities as number of parking spaces at river access sites, number of level camping spaces, and number of designated river access sites.

Social carrying capacity refers to the impacts that can occur when recreational users encounter other recreational users or landowners along the river, or vice versa. The degree of impact will vary according to the number, type, space and time periods of the encounter. The threshold of sensitivity toward other users, when exceeded, can result in appreciable loss of quality for the visitor and/or landowner.

When measuring carrying capacities and addressing limitation of user numbers in the Blackfoot River corridor the following must be addressed:

- consider the tolerance of adjacent landowners to recreational use.
- consider the capabilities of the river and adjoining lands to accommodate camping, floating and the various day-use activities.
- ensure an acceptable level of user satisfaction, including minimizing user conflicts and enhancement of the user's recreational experience.

- consider the capabilities and impacts on other rivers and recreation areas in western Montana, if any limitations are implemented on recreation use on the Blackfoot River

The following outline describes the **process** in which recreational carrying capacity will be addressed by the managing agencies:

1) Agencies will measure current use levels of all types of recreational users (floaters, wading anglers, picnickers, campers, etc.) in the entire river corridor.

2) Agencies will conduct survey-questionnaires which can provide data that addresses: a) demographics, b) user satisfaction levels, c) tolerance levels for crowding, d) account for types and popularity of various recreational activities, and e) reasons for visiting corridor.

3) Agencies will survey public's approval and disapproval for recreation use limits as a tool for addressing carrying capacity standards.

***(Please note: A Cooperative Management Agreement (CMA) will be the vehicle in order to obtain the steps stated in 1), 2), and 3.)**

4) The data collected will be conveyed to the RecSteerCom and the public in order to further the understanding of the recreational use occurring in the Blackfoot River corridor.

5) RecSteerCom will recommend appropriate and measurable indicators.

6) The Sponsoring Agencies will establish appropriate and measurable indicators.

7) For each indicator, a standard must be set. This standard will be a condition that alerts management that a change in the quality of the Blackfoot River corridor is occurring. Through public involvement and recommendations from the RecSteerCom, the Sponsoring

Agencies will ascertain specific management actions in order to prevent a change. Serious attempts will be made to include and involve both commercial and non-commercial public in this part of the process.

8) If required, Sponsoring Agencies will seek the proper authority needed to implement management practices to regulate (e.g., limit, user fee) commercial and non-commercial recreational use on the Blackfoot River. This authority will address all types of water based recreational activities, along with land based recreation activities found in the river=s corridor.

9) Sponsoring Agencies will use their authorized management authority to regulate user limits on their lands where public access is provided, and where plausible, where the river traverses through public lands.

10) FWP and the Sponsoring Agencies will form partnerships through agreements, such as a Cooperative Management Agreement, in order that the entire river can manage user numbers in a cooperative interagency format.

QUALITY OF THE EXPERIENCE

The Scoping Summary showed that the public's major hope for the future was the protection of the resource and preserving the quality of the experience. This led FWP and the Sponsoring Agencies to adopt a APurpose Statement" for this Management Direction document which is ATo Protect the Natural Resources of the Blackfoot River and to Preserve the Quality of the Recreational Experience for Future Generations." All of the elements of this Management Direction have been developed with this "Purpose Statement" in mind.

QUALITY OF THE EXPERIENCE - MANAGEMENT STATEMENT

- The "Purpose Statement" and specifically the protection of the recreational experience must be considered in all efforts to implement this management planning document.

LANDOWNERS

Landowners along the Blackfoot River are a significant element of this Management Direction. As has been previously identified, what happens within the drainage as well as what happens immediately along the river has major impacts on the recreation use of the river and the quality of the recreational experience. Likewise, the recreation use of the river can have major impacts on the landowners within the drainage. This Management Direction has attempted to consider the needs of landowners and they are reflected in the individual elements of this planning process. Landowner cooperation is a major element in the long-term protection and preservation of the resource. Landowner participation is crucial in the makeup of the RecSteerCom.

The involvement of landowners and the great cooperative spirit which has typified the 20-year history of the Blackfoot River Recreation Corridor is an excellent role model for the balance of the river. It is critical that landowners continue to be involved with the Management Agencies to ensure the successful implementation of this Plan. A forum for this to occur is discussed in the **MANAGEMENT AGENCIES** chapter wherein landowners will serve on the RecSteerCom.

LANDOWNERS - MANAGEMENT STATEMENT-

- It is critical that a forum be established for the involvement of landowners in the management of recreational use of the Blackfoot and for landowner participation with the Management Agencies who will implement some components of this Management Direction.

- Selected landowners who own property along the river will be appointed to the RecSteerCom.

MANAGEMENT COSTS

It is difficult at this time to fully identify the management costs associated with implementation of this planning document for the Blackfoot River. It is acknowledged that current funding available for management is limited and that it will prove to be inadequate in the future if most provisions of this Management Direction are to be implemented. FWP and the Sponsoring Agencies will continue to identify and evaluate possible ways of raising additional funds for management.

During the Scoping Process, it was determined that some users are willing to pay a fee for the use of the Blackfoot, particularly if it will work toward preserving the resource and recreation experience. User fees are considered by most to be equitable. A lot of ideas have been put forth as a means of establishing user fees. Implementation of fee systems, collection and enforcement are all matters which cause complications. Some of the better ideas involve having a State Parks Passport to use the Blackfoot, having a Conservation License to use the river, or perhaps having a special license or stamp to use the stream. An additional benefit to user fees is that the users who are outfitted for scenic/whitewater float trips would be paying toward the management of the river.

A number of other ideas have been suggested and all will be considered by the RecSteerCom. A program that has had some success in other areas of the country can be described as an AAdopt A Stream Program." Recreation users and others interested in preserving a stream actually get involved in assisting in the physical management of a stream, thereby reducing the amount of public funding necessary for management.

MANAGEMENT COSTS - NEEDS, CONSTRAINTS AND GUIDELINES -

A new program that is available to all federal agencies is called Recreation Fee Demo. If authorized, this program allows the district that collects the fees to keep the majority of the money on site for maintenance, improvements and administration. This program also allows for interagency and private partnerships.

Specifically, on the Blackfoot River the BLM and USFS are under this Recreation Fee Demo program. BLM recreation use fees are principally authorized by the Land and Water Conservation Act and its various amendments. Currently, the Lincoln District of the USFS has one campground which requires an overnight camping fee.

DNRC requires a Recreational Use License for general recreational activities on school trust lands for both commercial and non-commercial use. A fee is charged for this license. Montana State law requires DNRC to manage state school trust land in a manner that produces revenue to help support our state's public schools.

FWP requires an assessed user fee and a Special Recreational Permit for use on recreational sites they own or manage, when the group size has more than 30 people. Currently, FWP has five Fishing Access Sites which require an overnight camping fee (Johnsrud Park, Thibodeau, Corrick River Bend, Ninemile Prairie and Russell Gates). State law requires all anglers of age obtain a license (stated in current Montana Fishing Regulations).

The following outline describes the **process** in which a possible recreational user fee program will be addressed by the managing agencies:

1) Agencies will survey the public in order to determine the amount of support or lack of support for recreation user fees. A survey/questionnaire will also provide education and

information to the users of a possible future user fee program in the Blackfoot River corridor.

2) Existing and projected management/administrative costs of FWP and all Sponsoring Agencies will be provided to RecSteerCom.

***(Please note: A Cooperative Management Agreement (CMA) will be the vehicle in order to obtain the steps stated in 1) and 2).**

3) Sponsoring Agencies along with the recommendations of the RecSteerCom will determine the need of a Blackfoot River corridor User Fee Program. The following factors will be included in deciding the need for such a program:

-efficiency of present management practices in maintaining:

a) on-ground maintenance,

b) sanitation standards,

c) safety standards,

d) directional and informational signs,

e) law enforcement,

f) resource and site protection,

g) periodic improvements due to use and vandalism, and

h) administrative costs.

-equity with other user fees, licenses and Federal/state taxation.

-repercussions of such a program on surrounding recreational areas

4) If the need is warranted, the Sponsoring Agencies with guidance from the public and the RecSteerCom will seek fairness in user fees between outfitted and private users and resident and non-resident users. A user fee program will address all forms of recreational visitation in the Blackfoot River corridor.

MANAGEMENT DIRECTION ADOPTION PROCESS

The public has been very much involved in the process leading to the adoption of the Blackfoot River Recreation Management Direction. The following sections document this public involvement.

SCOPING MEETINGS

At the start of the planning process in July and August of 1995, public scoping meetings were held in Ovando, Potomac, Missoula, Seeley Lake, Lincoln, Great Falls and Helena. These meetings were held in the evening and were very well attended as over 170 individuals were counted.

CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

An eleven member Citizen Advisory Committee was organized early in the study and met throughout the process with the members of the Technical Advisory Committee and the Planning Team. Members of the Committee represented landowners, commercial recreational users, private recreational users, recreational equipment retailers, and conservation organizations. Meetings were held on July 13, 1995, October 5, 1995, April 24, 1996, and May 7, 1997. In developing the final draft, all CAC members were contacted on an individual basis to receive their conclusive input.

NEWSLETTER

A mailing list of over 100 individuals and agencies was developed throughout the course

of the planning process and a Newsletter was sent out in March of 1996. It reported on the results of the Scoping Meetings and gave a general overview of the planning process. It also listed the Sponsoring Agencies to whom comments might be directed regarding this planning document. A second letter was sent out in January 1999, which notified the mailing list of the completion of the Draft Management Direction, where copies of the Draft could be viewed, where public meetings on the Draft were to be held, and how comments on the Draft could be made.

DRAFT MANAGEMENT DIRECTION

The Draft Management Direction was completed in January 1999, and copies were placed in the offices of all agencies involved in the planning process and sent to libraries, courthouses, city or town halls, and planning offices throughout the area. Letters and press releases to the local media also announced the availability of the Draft. Two public meetings on the Draft Management Direction were held. These meetings were held in March of 1999 in Lincoln and Missoula. Over 100 people attended these meetings. The public was advised as to how they could provide comments and input to the Final Management Direction.

FINAL MANAGEMENT DIRECTION

Many comments which were received from the public in reference to the Draft Management Direction (See Appendix L) were expressed and included in the Final. Notices and press releases were sent out to advise the public of the completion of this planning document and of the schedule for adoption by the various Sponsoring Agencies.

MANAGEMENT DIRECTION UPDATES

Planning is an ongoing process that creates its own amount of evolution. This Management Direction is only the beginning, Aa snapshot in time," in identifying and addressing key issues. As portions of this planning document are implemented and as the RecSteerCom takes on each issue and brings them to a resolution, amendments and addenda will be made to this document. Once this Management Direction has outlived its usefulness it will be time to do an updated version of a management planning document.

-INSERT-

CONSERVATION EASEMENTS IN THE BLACKFOOT RIVER CORRIDOR

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A - AGENCY STUDIES

APPENDIX B - (1995) SCOPING MEETING HANDOUTS

APPENDIX C - SCOPING SUMMARY

APPENDIX D - WATER QUALITY STUDIES

APPENDIX E - FISHERIES STUDIES

APPENDIX F- ACCESS SITES AND FACILITIES

APPENDIX G- RecSteerCom PROPOSED MASTER PRIORITY LIST

APPENDIX H - COUNTY AGREEMENTS AND PLANS

APPENDIX I- WATER QUALITY AND QUANTITY

APPENDIX J- FISH AND WILDLIFE RESOURCES

APPENDIX K- POTENTIAL RECREATION MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

APPENDIX L- (1999) PUBLIC MEETINGS COMMENTS SUMMARY

APPENDIX A - AGENCY STUDIES

Fish, Wildlife & Parks -

1977 - ARecreational Use of the Lower Blackfoot River." This comprehensive study described the recreational resources, inventoried the public use, and developed management guidelines for the ABlackfoot River Corridor."

1989 - APreliminary Fisheries Inventory of the Big Blackfoot River." This reported on a fisheries inventory done in 1988 from the headwaters to the mouth. Young-of-the-year were sampled in the mainstem, earlier fish population surveys in the headwaters were repeated, three new population inventory sections were established, a voluntary creel census was conducted, and species of special concern were evaluated. The Big Blackfoot Chapter of Trout Unlimited assisted in funding of this work.

1990 - AInventory of Fishery Resources in the Blackfoot River and Major Tributaries." This reported on work done in 1989 and focused on identifying fisheries characteristics, habitat, and problems in the larger tributaries. Toxic metals accumulations in trout in the headwaters and long-term population monitoring sections in the main river were evaluated. Again, the Big Blackfoot Chapter of Trout Unlimited assisted in funding of this work.

1990 - AAquatic Investigations in the Middle Blackfoot River, Nevada Creek and Nevada Spring Creek Corridor." This reported on investigations of various water quality parameters, trout habitat conditions, fishery populations, and made recommendations for improvement of these important tributaries to the middle Blackfoot River. Impacts on the middle Blackfoot were also discussed.

1991 - "A Stream Habitat and Fisheries Analysis for Six Tributaries to the Big Blackfoot River." This reported on investigations performed in 1989 to conduct a fisheries habitat investigation and to provide supplemental information for a fisheries management plan. The Bureau of Land Management assisted in partial funding

of this work.

1992 - "Recreation Use of the Blackfoot River Recreation Corridor." This reported on recreation use during 1991 and was intended to duplicate some of the work done in the 1976 recreation use study in order to develop current use estimates and to compare them to the results of the 1976 study. The study also served to initiate work on this Management Plan.

- Various maps, information, and float guides developed by FWP to assist and guide recreation users of the Blackfoot.

1994 – "Blackfoot River User Survey." Survey of recreational use in the Blackfoot River using aerial counts from the mouth to Lincoln and angler interviews. Angler related social conflict questions addressed, species composition of angler catch, floater-bank angler and recreational float use by river section, and overall use.

1997 – "Blackfoot River Restoration Project Progress Report." This report is a comprehensive report detailing fishery study results from 1990 to 1996. The report includes cooperative fish habitat improvement project descriptions and monitoring progress, and factors related to bull and cutthroat trout recovery efforts along with ecological consideration within the Blackfoot River basin.

Bureau of Land Management (BLM) -

1986 - AGarnet Resource Area Resource Management Plan." This Plan provides a comprehensive framework for managing the public lands and allocating resources for the BLM lands in Missoula and Powell Counties, which lie in the Blackfoot River basin.

1994 - AGarnet Resource Area Resource Management Plan Amendment." The amendment was required due to the acquisition of lands by BLM.

1995 - A Garnet Resource Area Land Status Map (Ownership) and A Garnet Resource Area Travel Plan.

”Lolo National Forest -

1986 – “Lolo National Forest Plan”

1987 – “Limits of Acceptable Change for Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex”

1995 - “Draft Wild and Scenic Rivers Suitability Study and Environmental Impact Statement for Eight Rivers on the Lolo National Forest.” One of the rivers studied was the North Fork of the Blackfoot River.

Helena National Forest -

1989 - “An Analysis of Recreation Opportunities on the Lincoln Ranger District.” This was actually done by The University of Montana’s Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research for the Forest Service.

- “Helena National Forest Plan”

Water Quality Bureau, Department of Health & Environmental Sciences (Now the Department of Environmental Quality -

1988 - ABlackfoot River Water Quality Study Plan.” Outlined a proposed water quality study for the Blackfoot River.

1990 - “Water Quality Investigations in the Blackfoot River Drainage, Montana.” Reported the results of water quality monitoring to characterize water quality and biological integrity to see if degradation had contributed to declines in the river=s fishery and aquatic insect community. Also analyzed a 49-year record of streamflows to determine the effect of extensive logging on runoff patterns. This study was funded in part by the Big Blackfoot and Oakbrook, Illinois, chapters of Trout Unlimited.

Blackfoot Challenge -

-Miscellaneous documents prepared by the Blackfoot Challenge concerning the Blackfoot River from 1992 to the present. The Challenge is a forum that promotes cooperative resource management of the Blackfoot basin. Their mission is to coordinate efforts that will enhance, conserve, and protect the natural resources and rural lifestyle of the Valley for present and future generations by supporting environmentally responsible resource stewardship through the cooperation of public and private interests.

Lewis and Clark County -

1996 - "Draft Documents from Lincoln Area Comprehensive Plan."

Powell County -

1996 – "Draft Documents from Powell County Comprehensive Plan."

Missoula County -

1975 – "Missoula County Comprehensive Plan"

Seven Up Pete Joint Venture Mine -

- Various documents from their studies relating to their application to operate a new mine several miles east of Lincoln.

U. S. Geological Survey -

- “Assessment of Aquatic Resources in Blackfoot Basin”

U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service -

- Project Summary “The Blackfoot Valley Habitat Program,” 1994

APPENDIX B - SCOPING MEETINGS HANDOUTS

Informational Handout and Questionnaire attached

APPENDIX C - (1995) SCOPING SUMMARY

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

BLACKFOOT RIVER RECREATION MANAGEMENT PLANNING
SCOPING MEETING RESPONSE CONDENSED SUMMARY

(Meeting Locations: O-Ovando, P-Potomac, M-Missoula,
S-Seeley Lake, L-Lincoln, G-Great Falls, and H-Helena)

	MEETING LOCATION							
ISSUES	O	P	M	S	L	G	H	TOTAL
1. Outfitting……..	3	1	4	1	1	0	1	11
2. Recreational Experience……...	5	0	1	0	1	0	2	9
3. Numbers of Users……	5	1	2	0	1	1	1	11
4. Access……...	9	2	9	1	2	2	3	28
5. Quality of the Physical Resource…..	13	10	18	2	3	0	9	55
6. Management…….	4	1	8	1	1	1	4	20
7. Landowner Problems or Concerns....	2	0	1	1	1	0	4	9
8. Fisheries……	3	2	4	1	0	1	2	13
9. Land Use……..	2	3	13	0	4	3	4	29
10. Facilities…….	0	0	4	0	0	0	1	5

ISSUE SOLUTION

	O	P	M	S	L	G	H	TOTAL
1. Outfitter Permits/Licenses/Limits……..	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
2. User Education……..	2	0	4	0	0	0	1	7
3. User Fees……...	2	2	9	0	0	1	0	14
4. User Limits/Permits……..	7	3	2	0	0	0	0	12
5. More Access…….	1	0	1	0	3	1	1	7
6. Less (No New) Access……..	4	1	3	0	0	0	1	9
7. Resource Quality Improvements……...		0	1	6	0	0	0	0 7
8. Management Plan…….	1	0	3	1	0	0	4	9
9. Management Authority/Enforcement…...	3	0	3	0	0	1	1	8
10. Land Use Restrictions…….	6	4	12	0	2	3	3	30
11. Fisheries Regulations……..	3	4	2	1	0	1	1	12
12. Facilities……..	0	1	5	0	0	0	0	6
13. Cooperation with Landowners……	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	4

LAND OWNER PROBLEMS

	O	P	M	S	L	G	H	TOTAL
1. Trespass/Respect…….	4	1	1	0	1	0	0	7
2. Weeds……..	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
3. Number of Users…….	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
4. Trash……	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	4
5. Fire Danger……..	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
6. Human Waste……..	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
7. Damage……...	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
8. None……	0	1	1	0	0	2	0	4

RECREATION USE AREAS

	O	P	M	S	L	G	H	TOTAL
1. Upper……..	1	0	0	0	3	2	2	8
2. Middle…….	5	0	8	1	2	2	3	21
3. Lower……..	5	7	15	1	0	1	1	30
4. North Fork……...	1	1	2	1	0	1	1	7
5. All…….....	1	0	2	0	0	0	2	5

USER EXPECTATIONS

	O	P	M	S	L	G	H	TOTAL
1. Quality Outdoor Recreation Experience..	12	11	25	1	1	2	4	56
2. Solitude……	7	3	12	1	2	1	4	30
3. Good Fishing……...	1	3	4	1	1	0	1	11

MOST IMPORTANT THING WHICH COULD BE DONE

	O	P	M	S	L	G	H	TOTAL
1. User Education……	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
2. User Management/Limits/Permits……..	7	2	3	1	0	1	4	18
3. Land Use Restrictions…….	1	1	8	2	0	0	2	14
4. Controlled or Defined Access…….	1	1	0	1	2	0	1	6
5. Resource Protection……	1	0	4	0	0	1	1	7
6. Fishery Improvement/Regulations……..	1	1	1	2	0	1	0	6
7. Good Management Plan……..	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	4
8. Status Quo……	0	2	4	0	0	0	0	6
9. Deal with Commercial Use Issue…….	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	3
10. More Facilities……	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1

HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

	O	P	M	S	L	G	H	TOTAL	
1. Resource Protected……		7	3	23	0	2	3	7	45
2. Fishery Maintained or Improved.....…		1	0	2	0	0	0	1	4
3. Continued Public Use/Facilities……		1	2	3	0	0	1	0	7
4. Preserve the Quality of the Experience.....	3	1	5	0	0	1	2	12	
5. Regulated Access……...	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	3	
6. Reasonable Use Limitations……..	0	4	2	1	0	0	1	8	
7. Regulate Commercial Use…….	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	3	
8. Private Property Protected…….	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	

APPENDIX D - WATER QUALITY STUDIES

Conclusions of the Water Quality Study performed by the Water Quality Bureau are summarized in the following:

Streamflows in 1988-1989 and Historical Patterns.

The 1988-1989 monitoring period was marked by large variations in streamflow, thus providing a good opportunity to document water quality characteristics during both extreme low and unusually high streamflow. The above-normal spring runoff of 1989 also allowed the examination of concentrations of suspended sediment and other pollutants during the first major flushing flows following several years of extreme drought.

An analysis of trends in total Blackfoot Basin water discharge and timing of runoff over a 49-year period of record indicated no significant changes resulting from extensive timber harvest in the drainage. No significant upward or downward trend was noted for streamflows during summer, fall, or winter periods. A weak trend of declining spring streamflows was indicated. However, long-term weather patterns could have had an influence.

Basic Water Quality Characteristics

The water chemistry of the Blackfoot River was markedly influenced by inputs of mine effluent in the headwaters. Alkalinity and pH were depressed for some 20 river miles due to the effects of acid mine drainage. Water hardness and concentrations of dissolved minerals were elevated for more than 10 river miles due to the dissolution of mineral ions by the acid discharge.

Inflows of limestone groundwater or springs below Lincoln increased the potential fertility of the Blackfoot River and enhanced its buffering capacity against changes in pH and the effects of metals.

Water hardness and other variables were reduced during the high, dilutional flows of runoff, leaving resident biota more susceptible to toxic effects of metals from headwater sources.

The middle and lower Blackfoot River had moderate levels of dissolved minerals, alkalinity and water hardness, which were generally comparable to other west slope streams. These variables have an influence on a river's ability to support aquatic life. By comparison to productive east slope fisheries such as the Madison or Beaverhead Rivers, the Blackfoot is probably somewhat limited in its ability to support high densities of fish due to its basic water chemistry.

Suspended Sediment and Turbidity

Concentrations of suspended sediment and turbidity in the Blackfoot River were minimal during low streamflows and no significant sources or problems were indicated.

Most of the total sediment discharge in the basin occurred during a relatively brief spring runoff period. Landers Fork, Nevada Creek, and the North Fork appeared to be the largest sources of sediment discharge to the Blackfoot River. Nevada Creek discharged the bulk of it s sediment load early in the spring runoff period and had a major influence on suspended sediment concentrations downstream in the Blackfoot River. Landers Fork and the North Fork discharged the most sediment during peak snowmelt later in the runoff period. Sediment discharged from the North Fork in 1989 may have been heightened by the 1988 Canyon Creek fire which burned much of the North Fork watershed. Due to it location in the headwaters area, Landers Fork degraded more miles of the Blackfoot River with elevated sediment concentrations than the other tributaries.

Longer-term monitoring data suggested that suspended sediment concentrations in the Blackfoot River during Spring 1989 were higher and elevated for a longer period than during any of the past five years. This information supports the hypothesis that fine sediments may have accumulated in the river during the recent drought years.

Heavy Metals

Metals from historic mining activities in the Blackfoot River headwaters were clearly the most acute water quality problem in the watershed.

Water column concentrations of heavy metals were highest during the first part of spring runoff, indicating that nonpoint sources (e.g. streamside and stream channel tailings material, precipitated metal salts) may be more important overall than point sources (e.g. Mike Horse adit discharge). The threat of metals to aquatic life was exacerbated during runoff conditions due to reduced water hardness and its effect on metal toxicity.

At least 10 to 12 miles of the upper Blackfoot River periodically experience potentially damaging water column concentrations of heavy metals. Concentrations of copper, lead, and cadmium exceeded aquatic life toxicity criteria levels in the upper five to seven miles of the Blackfoot River during spring runoff. Zinc was a more widespread and persistent problem. Instream zinc concentrations exceeded toxicity values in the upper 10-12 miles of the river during higher flows and up to five miles of the river during low flows.

During the 1989 runoff period, water column metals concentrations were elevated and detectable throughout the length of the river, although concentrations in most of the river were well below the applicable criteria. Water column metals concentrations did not appear to be a

serious problem below the Hogum Creek Road bridge.

Instream metals concentrations in 1988-1989 were generally within the ranges of concentrations reported for 1968-1973.

Algal Nutrients

Nutrient concentrations in the Blackfoot River were generally low, except during runoff conditions when nonpoint inputs of nutrients were evident.

Nevada Creek was a readily apparent source of bioavailable phosphorus during runoff. Its discharge increased downstream Blackfoot River concentrations to above levels which would be expected to limit development of nuisance algal growths. The presence of noxious densities of filamentous green algae in the Blackfoot River from the Nevada Creek confluence nearly to the North Fork may have been influenced by nutrient loading from the Nevada Creek watershed. Nutrient concentrations in Nevada Creek during May 1989 were well above those in all other monitored Blackfoot River tributaries.

Elevated concentrations of ammonia-nitrogen in the Blackfoot River downstream of Nevada Creek during April 1989 pointed to the presence of agricultural or feedlot runoff. Sustained downstream ammonia concentrations indicated the presence of more than one source.

Landers Fork, the North Fork, and Elk and Union Creeks contained high total phosphorus concentrations during high flows, relative to other tributaries. Phosphorus concentrations in these tributaries were believed to be primarily attributable to elevated sediment concentrations.

Landers Fork, Chamberlain Creek and Elk Creek had somewhat elevated nitrogen concentrations, suggesting moderate nonpoint source pollution problems.

Overall, the Blackfoot River was relatively nutrient-poor when compared to other Clark Fork Basin streams and various east slope rivers. Low nutrient concentrations in much of the river may limit its inherent fertility with respect to fish production. Conversely, its nutrient-poor status undoubtedly contributes to it water clarity, relatively algae-free stream bottom, and overall aesthetic appeal relative to many other rivers.

Chronic Toxicity Bioassays

Toxicity in the upper reaches of the Blackfoot River (Meadow Creek to Flesher Pass Road) was conclusive and was supported by water quality data demonstrating concentrations of copper, zinc, cadmium and lead which exceeded criteria for the protection of aquatic life. The extent of toxicity may be farther downstream during high flows than was observed in these bioassays. The cause of toxicity was probably mine drainage from the Mike Horse Mine area and/or the

Carbonate Mine along Highway 200.

Toxic effects (increased mortality and/or depressed reproduction) occurred in waters collected from the middle reaches of the river (approximately sites 5 through 10) in two of the three bioassays (low flow bioassays). Because water quality testing did not identify toxicants, it could be that the "toxicity" was not real but was related to other factors (inappropriate control; contamination; an unidentified toxicant; acclimation problems between control and mainstem). The pattern of toxicity (good relationship between mortality and poor reproduction; consistency between bioassays; steadily decreasing reproduction in a downstream direction) suggest that the toxicity was real. The failure to identify the presence of the most suspect toxicants (ammonia, heavy metals, other priority pollutants) suggest the toxicity was not real. Perhaps the toxicity was real and the cause remains unidentified.

Macroinvertebrate Community Structure

The aquatic insect community in the Blackfoot River during August 1988 was a good indicator of biological integrity and water quality conditions.

From the headwaters downstream to the Flesher Pass road, heavy metals pollution was the overwhelming problem and the macroinvertebrate community exhibited numerous indications of metals-related stress. The benthic community in the upper Blackfoot was virtually unchanged from that described in the early 1970's.

Community structure in the middle Blackfoot River, from Hogum Creek to the Helmville Bridge, indicated generally good water quality. However, reduced biological integrity pointed to a combination of subtle environmental stresses. The most discernible impacts were from slight to moderate levels of organic and/or nutrient enrichment. In addition, habitat degradation associated with sediment deposition was suggested at two locations. Other drought-related factors, including reduced habitat availability due to low streamflows, elevated summer water temperatures, enhanced growth of aquatic vegetation, and reduced bedload transport and scouring may have influenced the reduced biological integrity found in the middle river. Changes in benthic community abundance, taxonomic composition and the relative abundance of functional groups were apparent when compared to early 1970's conditions.

The macroinvertebrate community in the lower Blackfoot River below the North Fork appeared to be entirely healthy and no significant water quality or habitat degradation was evident.

Priority Pollutant Analyses

Of more than 120 toxic organic compounds which were tested for, only one was present in the Blackfoot River in concentrations above the limit of analytical detection.

The compound was a phthalate ester which is common in the environment and whose presence in the samples may have resulted from contamination in the field or in the lab.

Phthalate concentrations were below human health standards but slightly exceeded the chronic toxicity criterion for freshwater aquatic life at some locations during spring runoff. However, as suggested, the results may not be valid.

A synopsis of the water quality study follows:

Our 1988-1989 stream monitoring in the Blackfoot River Basin provided answers to many water quality-related questions about the river system. The results have improved our understanding of the extent and severity of pollution problems in the Blackfoot Basin. While suspected problems were confirmed and new ones identified, the overall synopsis, at least on the surface, appears optimistic:

1) While several miles of the Blackfoot's headwaters remain seriously polluted, water quality conditions and the benthic community appear to be much the same as in the early 1970's.
2) Water quality problems in the middle reaches of the river were relatively subtle and resulted from moderate nonpoint source pollution which may have been exacerbated by a prolonged drought.
3) The lower river below the North Fork was generally in excellent condition relative to water quality and biological health.

Why, then has the river's aquatic community, and especially its fishery, declined from its former status? Perhaps the real issue has eluded our best efforts. Just as stress or an unhealthy lifestyle can sap the vitality of an otherwise healthy human being and a diagnosis cannot be made, it is possible that a combination of nearly undetectable chronic stresses are taking their toll on the Blackfoot River. Aquatic ecosystems are exceedingly complex and the cumulative effects of many seemingly minor actions may result in serious complications over time. As an example, Figure (41) demonstrates some possible effects of watershed alterations and the interrelatedness of water quality variables.

Quite likely, the recent drought years have magnified the river's response to the myriad of potential stresses in the watershed through a diminished ability to metabolize or flush pollutants. Granted, problems have not only become apparent during the drought, but things appear to have gotten worse. This suggests that the Blackfoot River may be approaching a threshold level of stress. While the situation will likely improve with the years of higher streamflows that are sure to come, the real problems will not have been resolved.

In our minds, the biggest question which remains unanswered is that of the effects of deposited sediments in the Blackfoot watershed. Our study did not address this issue, or have other investigations to date thoroughly explored it. Gradual increases in sediment delivery or deposition rates either in tributaries or the mainstem, can have serious consequences over time. Expected effects include decreased reproduction rates for trout, increasing water temperatures, reduced habitat quality and decreased availability of food. All the while, water quality may remain relatively high. Future monitoring efforts should concentrate in the area of habitat quality, sediment deposition rates, substrate composition and embeddedness.

The following recommendations were suggested by the authors of the Water Quality Study Report:

1. Eliminate or reduce inputs of mine effluent and runoff from mine spoils in headwaters drainages.
2. Inventory/evaluate tributary sediment sources and implement effective erosion control measures.
3. Evaluate the effects of current sediment delivery rates to the aquatic community and establish instream criteria.
4. Evaluate nutrient/algae relationships in the Blackfoot River and identify and control nutrient sources in the Nevada Creek drainage if needed.
5. Confirm or disprove the apparent chronic toxicity in the middle Blackfoot River and identify toxicants.
6. Establish a baseline record of water temperature regimes for key reaches of the Blackfoot River and its tributaries.
7. Reevaluate the macroinvertebrate community composition in the middle reaches of the Blackfoot River following the high streamflows of spring 1989.
8. Compile economic data to show the recreational value of the Blackfoot River.
9. Promote cooperation between researchers, resource managers, private industry, citizen=s groups and the general public.
10. Carefully monitor new land use/resource development projects in the Blackfoot Basin for potential impacts to the river.
11. Water quality and fisheries management agencies should direct more funding and effort toward preserving existing high quality watersheds.
12. Continue to support the development of the Blackfoot River Basin Geographical Information System (GIS) and water quality model by the U. S. EPA and implement its use in all resource management planning and development activities in the basin.

APPENDIX E - FISHERIES STUDIES

Some of the general conclusions and recommendations from the various fisheries studies are contained in the following:

1) Habitat and fisheries characteristics of the Blackfoot River are diverse and require that the drainage be broken into at least five distinct reaches for management purposes. Each reach appears to have its own problems and limiting factors that must be addressed individually. These reach breaks also correspond with relatively distinct changes in the composition of the fishery. The five reaches are -

Reach 1: Headwaters to Lincoln
Reach 2: Lincoln to Nevada Creek
Reach 3: Nevada Creek to Monture Creek
Reach 4: Monture Creek to Belmont Creek
Reach 5: Belmont Creek to Mouth

2) Trout populations were below expected levels in virtually all reaches sampled. Depressed trout populations appear to result from a combination of natural limiting factors and human interferences. Future enhancement efforts should be reach specific, and take into account natural environmental influences as well as those resulting from human activities such as land use and angler exploitation.

3) Populations of native trout species of the Blackfoot River, cutthroat and bull trout, appear to be particularly threatened. In order to maintain or enhance current population densities and ensure viable gene pools, there is a need for additional protective management of these species.

Fisheries work recommendations included:

1) Conduct annual spring population inventories for five years to establish a baseline and aid in evaluating restrictive regulations imposed during the 1988 drought conditions.

2) Survey major tributaries to identify spawning use and assess condition of resident trout fisheries. Emphasis should be placed on native trout species.

3) Continue tagging studies in conjunction with population inventories to evaluate fish movement trends and determine seasonal use patterns.

4) Continue and expand the scope of the voluntary creel census.

5) Develop public consensus for future fisheries management.

6) Develop a river management plan to deal with public concerns and resource issues.

Some of the conclusions and recommendations from the 1989 study include:

Nineteen major tributary streams in the Big Blackfoot river were surveyed in 1989. Fish populations of catchable-sized cutthroat, the dominate species in most of the streams, are considered poor for western Montana. Low densities of adult cutthroat and young-of-the-year may indicate recruitment sensitive populations. Lower segments of most tributaries carried populations of brown and rainbow trout, particularly younger age classes. The lack of physical barriers to upstream migration for the rainbow and brown trout suggest environmental limitations for these species in middle and upstream reaches.

Significant declines were observed for older aged rainbow trout (4 years and older) in the Johnsrud section. Estimated densities declined in 1989 to 12.5 per 1,000 lineal feet of stream from 45 in 1985. The Scotty Brown Bridge section showed no change from 1988 to 1989, and the total population of all trout 4 inches and longer in this section was 61.4 per 1,000 feet.

Species of special concern, westslope cutthroat and sometimes bull trout, dominated fish samples in the headwater reaches of most tributaries. Only 3 of the 19 sampled tributary streams had significant numbers of young-of-the-year bull trout.

Lethal concentrations of cadmium were found in the livers of cutthroat trout in sections of the Blackfoot River below the Mike Horse Mine tailings pond. Low densities of young-of-the-year and resulting older aged cutthroat may be attributable to the high metals concentrations in the upper river system sediments since the failure of a tailings pond in 1975.

<u>Westslope Cutthroat Trout Management Objectives for Blackfoot River: Increase populations of cutthroat larger than 6 inches in the Blackfoot River 100 fish per 1,000 feet.</u>

STRATEGIES:

1. Catch and release regulation on Blackfoot River and tributary streams for Cutthroat.

2. Improve spawning and rearing habitat where needed.

3. Re-establish spawning runs in identified vacant habitat.

4. Sample Cutthroat and Brook trout, stream bottom sediments, and aquatic insects for toxic metals concentrations in suspect areas.

Bull Trout Management Objective for the Blackfoot River: Increase the standing crop of adult bull trout larger than 5 pounds to 1 fish per 1,000 feet.

STRATEGIES:

1. Catch and release regulations on Blackfoot River and tributary streams for Bull Trout.

2. Improve spawning and rearing habitat where needed.

3. Re-establish spawning runs in identified vacant habitat.

Rainbow Trout Management Objective for the Blackfoot River: 1. Mouth to Belmont Creek (lower 21 miles). Increase the opportunity to catch rainbow trout larger than 12 inches by increasing the population of rainbow trout larger than 12 inches to 100 per 1,000 feet from 12.4 per 1,000 feet. 2. Above Belmont Creek. Increase the opportunity to catch rainbow trout larger than 12 inches by increasing the population of rainbow trout larger than 12 inches to 50 per 1,000 feet from 0.5 per 1,000 feet.

STRATEGIES:

1. Reduce harvest of Rainbow Trout with a 3 fish limit for fish less than 12 inches and catch and release on fish larger than 12 inches for the Blackfoot and key spawning streams. Bait and artificial lures allowed.

2. Improve key spawning habitat where possible.

Brown Trout Management Objective for the Blackfoot River: 1. Lincoln to Monture Creek. Maintain population of brown trout larger than 8 inches at a density of at least 20 fish per 1,000 feet. 2. Monture Creek to mouth. Maintain population of brown trout larger than 8 inches at a density of at least 20 fish per 1,000 feet.

STRATEGIES:

1. Reduce harvest of Brown Trout with a 3 fish limit for fish less than 12 inches and catch and release on fish larger than 12 inches for the Blackfoot and tributaries. Bait and artificial lures allowed.

APPENDIX F - CURRENT RIVER ACCESS SITES AND EXISTING FACILITIES

Name of site (Ownership/Manager)	Location (River mile from Confluence of Clark Fork river)	Facilities
REACH 1. Headwaters to Mineral Hill Area		
Aspen Grove Campground and Picnic Area (USFS)	117.8	Parking, toilet, picnic tables, fire rings, drinking water, camping, fees
Stemple Pass Road Bridge (Lincoln townsite/Lewis & Clark Co.)	109.1	(No facilities)
Sauerkraut Creek Access (BLM)	102.3	(No facilities)
Moose Creek (Nevada Rd. Bridge) (USFS)	94.9	Parking, camping, toilet
Kershaw Access (BLM)	93.6	(No facilities)
Arrastra Access (BLM)	89.3	(No facilities)
Trapper Flats Access (BLM)	86.9	(No facilities)
REACH 2. Mineral Hill to North Fork Confluence		
Mineral Hill Access (Hwy. 141 Bridge) (BLM)	84.9	(No facilities)
Aunt Molly FAS (FWP)	72.0	Parking, Day-use
Cedar Meadow FAS (FWP)	66.5	Parking, Day-use
Newman Raymond Bridge (Powell County)	60.0	(No facilities, uncontrolled parking on private land)

REACH 3. North Fork Confluence to Russell Gates FAS (ACounty Line≅)

River Junction FAS (FWP)	54.1	Parking, toilet, picnic tables, fire rings, camping
Scotty Brown Bridge (Powell County/Private)	45.7	Limited parking, limited use, Day-use

REACH 4. Russell Gates FAS to Roundup FAS

Russell Gates FAS (FWP)	41.9	Parking, toilet, picnic table, fire rings, camping, drinking water, fees
Sperry Grade (DNRC)	39.8	Parking, Day-use
Clearwater Bridge (FWP/Private)	34.7	Limited parking, Day-use
Sunset Hill FAS (FWP/Private)	32.8	Limited parking, Day-use

REACH 5. Roundup FAS to Johnsrud Park FAS

Roundup FAS (FWP/Private)	30.2	Parking, toilet, Day-use
Ninemile Prairie FAS (FWP)	26.7	Parking, toilet, picnic tables, fire rings, camping
Corrick River Bend FAS (FWP)	24.7	Parking, toilet, picnic tables, fire rings, Camping, drinking water, fees
Belmont Creek FAS (FWP/BLM)	21.9	Parking, Day-use
Red Rock FAS (FWP/BLM)	19.6	Parking, Day-use
Whitaker Bridge FAS (FWP/BLM)	19.5	Parking, Day-use
Day-Use Area FAS (FWP/BLM)	19.3	Parking, Day-use
Thibodeau FAS (FWP/BLM)	18.9	Parking, toilet, picnic tables, fire rings, camping, fees
Day-Use Area FAS (FWP/BLM)	18.5	Parking, Day-use

Sheep Flats FAS (FWP/BLM)	17.2	Parking, Day-use
Daigle's Eddy FAS (FWP/BLM)	16.4	Parking, Day-use

REACH 6. Johnsrud Park FAS to Bonner Townsite (Stimson Lumber Co. Mill)

Johnsrud Park FAS (FWP)	13.3	Parking, toilet, picnic tables, fire rings, group use area with shelter, ball field, drinking water, camping, fees
K. Ross Toole FAS (FWP)	10.0	Parking, Day-use
Angevine (Plum Creek)	8.9	Parking
Highway 200 Bridge ("Wisherd Bridge") (MDT)	6.7	(No facilities, uncontrolled parking)
Marco Flats FAS (FWP)	3.5	Parking, Day-use
AOld Weigh Scales Station≅	2.0	(No facilities, uncontrolled parking)
(MDT/Plum Creek Timber Co.)		

REACH 7. North fork of the Blackfoot River (North Fork Falls to Confluence of the Main

North Fork Cabin (USFS)		Ranger cabin, information
North Fork Trailhead (USFS)	18.5	Parking, toilet, drinking water, basic livestock facilities
Highway 200 Bridge (DOT)	6.1	(No facilities, uncontrolled parking)
Harry Morgan FAS (FWP)	2.4	Parking, toilet, picnic tables, fire rings, camping

APPENDIX G - RecSteerCom PROPOSED MASTER PRIORITY LIST

The following list suggest possible issues to be addressed by the Recreation Steering Committee (RecSteerCom), and in-turn provide the Sponsoring Agencies with recommendations. The listed order of these issues does not suggest that some matters are more important than others or that the Committee and Agencies will deal with specific issues before others.

- Commercial use
  - define commercial use
  - possibly create a commercial use policy

- Use limitation
  - decide physical and social acceptable use limits for specific river reaches
  - possibly create a use limitation plan

- User Fee System
  - determine financial management needs
  - possibly establish equitable recreational user fee policy for all agencies.

- Access and Facilities
  - determine physical and social acceptable limits for specific river reaches as stated in the Recreation Setting, Opportunities and Guidelines found in this document
  - each sponsoring agency determines future access site designs and management actions through a river wide, holistic management approach

- Water Quality and Quantity
  - determine present and future roles the RecSteerCom will play in monitoring and managing the river's water quality and quantity in an attempt to protect the natural resources that provide satisfactory recreational experiences

- Wildlife and Fisheries
  - continue to format this planning process to include the wildlife and fisheries resources of the river as being crucial components of the recreational experience on this river

- Land Use
  - define the role the RecSteerCom must take with land use practices in order to facilitate in the protection of a quality recreational experience and to maintain current rural lifestyles existing along the river

APPENDIX H - COUNTY AGREEMENTS AND PLANS

- Missoula County Comments (attached)

- Scotty Brown Bridge Agreement (attached)

- Blackfoot River Recreation Corridor Landowners' Agreement (attached)

APPENDIX I - WATER QUALITY AND QUANTITY

WATER QUALITY

The water quality of the Blackfoot River was studied extensively in the years prior to 1975. Subsequent to 1975, extensive logging took place on both private and public lands in the drainage. The Mike Horse Mine, located in the headwaters area, had its tailings dam breached in a flood while local placer mining operations and agricultural non-point source impacts continued. In the late 1980's there was a growing public concern over an apparent declining fishery in the drainage. Numerous reports were received from long-time anglers indicated that the numbers and size of sport fish had decreased significantly. FWP census figures showed increasing fishing pressure on the river and anglers observed fewer invertebrate organisms in the river.

The Big Blackfoot Chapter of Trout Unlimited was formed in 1987 in response to the concerns and significant private and government money was raised to perform fisheries and water quality studies of the river. The Water Quality Bureau of the Montana Department of Health and Environmental Sciences (now Water Division of the Department of Environmental Quality) was retained to perform water quality investigations during 1988-1989. Results of this work are contained in a report entitled "WATER QUALITY INVESTIGATIONS IN THE BLACKFOOT RIVER DRAINAGE, MONTANA", A Report to the Big Blackfoot River and Oakbrook, Illinois Chapters of Trout Unlimited, July 1990. (See Appendix D)

The water quality study was performed to determine if there was a water quality basis for the decline in the river's fish and insect communities. Possible causes of impairment included metals from mining activities, sedimentation from agricultural and forest practices, and toxic organics from agricultural lands. The objectives of the study plan were:

1. Establish current ambient water quality conditions in the river during high and low streamflow conditions.
2. Determine if chronic toxicity is present in the river during high and low streamflows.
3. Characterize the benthic macroinvertebrate community composition and health, determine causes of any documented imbalances, and compare current community structure to that present 15-20 years ago.
4. Document concentrations of organic and other toxic pollutants in the river downstream from major agricultural sub-basins.

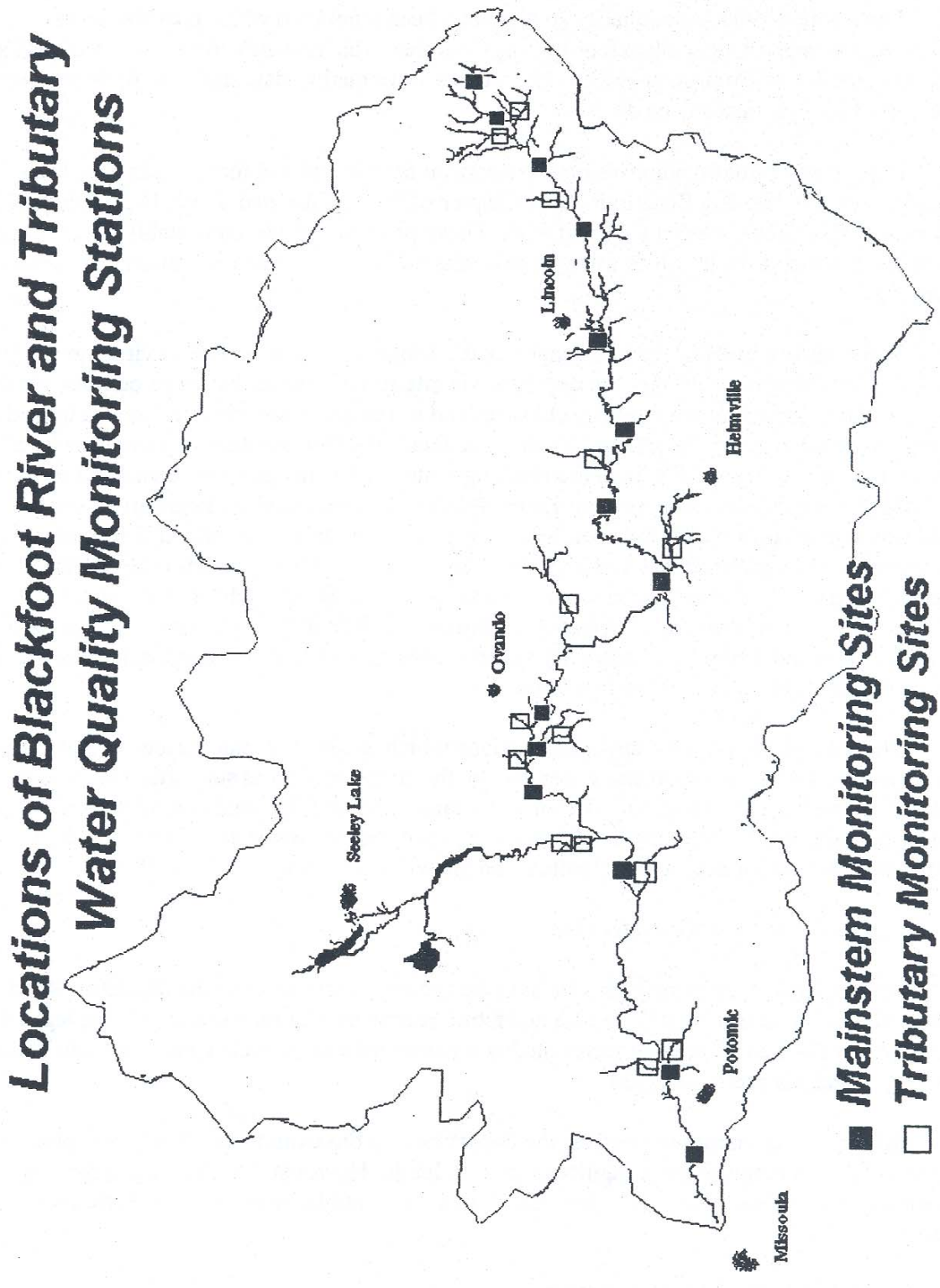
During the course of the study, a fifth objective was added. Concerns about possible cumulative effects of intensified timber harvest in the Blackfoot watershed prompted an evaluation to determine whether wide spread silvicultural activities in the basin had affected 1) the total annual volume of runoff, and 2) the timing of runoff, with consequent effects on water quality in the river and its tributaries.

A map showing the locations of the water quality monitoring stations is contained on Figure 5. There were a total of 14 mainstem monitoring sites and 15 tributary monitoring sites. Earliest samples were taken in July of 1988 and the last in August of 1989.

The results of the water quality study are contained in Appendix D. This study was particularly valuable as it portrayed a comprehensive picture of water quality throughout the Blackfoot drainage. It found that the upper river had some serious problems resulting from runoff from old mining spoils, but that conditions had not changed from those found in the early 70's. The middle reaches of the river were found to have subtle problems from moderate nonpoint source pollution, while the lower river was in excellent health.

The water quality study demonstrated that water quality in the Blackfoot River is influenced by both natural and land use related activities. The most notable natural cause were the forest fires of 1988 which created sediment impacts in the North Fork. The land use impacts were caused by past and present forestry activities, past mining activities, and past and present agricultural activities.

FIGURE 8: LOCATIONS OF BLACKFOOT RIVER AND TRIBUTARY WATER QUALITY MONITORING STATIONS



During the 1990's water quality studies have been conducted which provides more information on the Upper Blackfoot Mining Complex. This research conducted by DNRC and the Department of Environmental Quality reflects water quality data since old mine reclamation projects had been implemented.

Recent water quality improvement projects on agricultural and forest lands have been implemented by the Big Blackfoot River Chapter of Trout Unlimited, FWP, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Plum Creek Timber Co., and SCS. These projects include, bank stabilization, water sources developed for livestock away from creeks and rivers, stream restoration and riparian fencing.

Water quality in Montana is managed by the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Most mining activities are regulated via site specific waste discharge permits. However, forestry and agriculture are typically characterized as non-point sources and are encouraged to utilize what are termed "Best Management Practices" (BMP's). Another way of characterizing BMP's is, "if you use BMP's, then the resulting water quality impacts are considered acceptable." Passage of the Stream Management Zone (SMZ) law by the Montana Legislature applies additional protection within the stream side corridor. Department of Natural Resources Forestry Division is given enforcement authority over the SMZ law. DEQ also has rules relating to non-degradation which may influence some of these land uses. DEQ establishes standards for sewage disposal from both community treatment facilities as well as individual septic systems. Although DEQ reviews and approves community systems, local county health departments permit and inspect individual septic disposal systems.

DEQ also establishes stream classifications which require the maintenance of water quality at various levels to accommodate water uses by the public as well as supporting aquatic life. The Blackfoot drainage is classified B-1 in the Montana water quality standards, which indicates that its high quality waters are capable of supporting all beneficial water uses, including drinking water supplies, swimming and recreation, and growth and propagation of trout.

Management Statement for Water Quality-

Water quality is extremely important to the recreation resources of the Blackfoot River. Therefore, this Management Direction and future recreation planning needs to place highest priority on efforts to insure that water quality is preserved and protected and that State Water Quality Standards are maintained.

From a management perspective, the Department of Environmental Quality has primary responsibility to manage water quality on private lands. However, the Recreation Steering Committee and its individual members can represent the public interest in protecting water quality.

Implementation will be as follows:

-FWP administers the Stream Protection Act (124) activities.

-The Natural Streambed Land Preservation Act (310) is administered by local conservation districts. FWP serves as a team member in reviewing private landowner stream alteration permits.

-The 1988-1989 water quality study discussed the history of water quality in the Blackfoot, identified current water quality problem areas, and suggested recommendations to maintain or improve water quality conditions. RecSteerCom will review and follow through with these recommendations where ever possible.

- FWP and other agencies will review proposals and provide input to reviewers-regulators-permitors, etc., to insure that the interests of the recreating public are considered. These agencies will share this information with the RecSteerCom via their representative.

- The Sponsoring Agencies who manage lands within the drainage will monitor activities on their lands to insure the protection of water quality (includes the Lolo and Helena National Forests, the Bureau of Land Management, the State Lands Unit of the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, and Plum Creek Timber Company). These lands are managed by these agencies in a manner so as to protect and preserve water quality and to correct documented problem areas. BMP's as recommended by the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and DEQ will be utilized with/in agency land use plans. Whereas, water quality on private lands will continue to be monitored by DEQ.

WATER QUANTITY

Water quantity is influenced naturally by amounts of precipitation and by man's activities, principally the use of water for irrigation. Under Montana water law it is possible for irrigation water rights to exceed the amount of water flowing within a particular stream which can result in serious and in some cases total dewatering. In the Blackfoot drainage a number of tributary streams as well as the North Fork are periodically impacted by irrigation water use. A significant water right on the Blackfoot is owned by the Montana Power Company which produces hydroelectric power at its plant at Milltown, just below the Blackfoot's mouth at Bonner. The Milltown facility is one of the oldest in the Clark Fork drainage and its water right was established in 1904.

FWP has an instream flow right in the Blackfoot (referred to as "Murphy Rights") for fish and wildlife maintenance purposes. These rights were appropriated for the Blackfoot River in 1970 by the Montana Fish and Game Commission and Legislative action. The instream rights span the 54.1 mile reach from the mouth of the Blackfoot to the North Fork of the Blackfoot. Instream flows were claimed by seasonal time periods: 650 cfs, September 1st to March 31st; 700 cfs, April 1st to 15th, 1,130 cfs April 16th to 30th; 2000 cfs, May 1st to June 30th; 1,523 cfs, July 1st to 15th; and 700 cfs, July 16th to August 31st.

FWP has some authority to lease water rights under certain circumstances to preserve in-stream flows for maintenance of aquatic life. Examples of existing leases include Blanchard, Chamberlain and Pearson Creeks. FWP also works extensively with irrigators to promote an understanding of the needs to maintain in-stream flows and to promote the wise management of water use to insure instream flows for aquatic life.

In certain situations private groups or organizations have been granted authority by the Legislature to lease water rights for instream flow enhancement.

Balancing the beneficial and sometimes competing water uses along the Blackfoot and the rest of the Upper Clark Fork River Basin has become more of an issue in recent years. To address the use issues the Montana Legislature authorized the creation of the Upper Clark Fork River Steering Committee to draft a comprehensive water management plan. The Committee has made the following recommendations:

1) Closing the Clark Fork drainage to new surface and some groundwater rights. The restrictions would be statutory and would be reviewed every five years. This action has been taken.
2) Holding the existing water reservations in abeyance. This would also be reviewed every five years. This action has also been taken.
3) Creation of ongoing river basin and watershed committees to assist in resolution of water related disputes. Six of these committees have been established, including one for the Blackfoot River.

4) Submit reports concerning the relationship between surface water and groundwater, and the cumulative impacts of groundwater with drawl for each sub-basin.
5) Identify potential beneficiaries of and a funding mechanism for new and expanded water storage sites.
6) Authorizes the instream flow pilot program.

Management Statement for Water Quantity-

DNRC has responsibility to monitor and investigate water rights and quantity problems as they occur. FWP will continue monitoring stream flows associated with their "Murphy Rights" as they relate to the Blackfoot and will keep the RecSteerCom apprised of issues. The Scope of this management document is directed at the main stem of the Blackfoot River and the North Fork. In this regard FWP will:

- Develop a better understanding of floating problems associated with both high and low flows in the various reaches of the river. For safety purposes, attempt to correlate skill level of floaters with flow conditions and make this information available to the public.

- Work with the irrigators to see if problems can be solved or mitigated by the timing and management of the with drawl of irrigation water from the stream. FWP has had a successful history of working with irrigators within the Blackfoot drainage, and this experience should be of assistance.

- Use its ability to lease water rights to increase instream flows where and when cooperative opportunities are available.

In addition, the RecSteerCom and its individual members will:

- Encourage and support efforts and legislation which deals with the leasing of water rights for instream flow enhancement.

- Assist or work through the Blackfoot Challenge to facilitate more efficient irrigation systems on private lands with the end result being more water available in the river. Encourage organizations, such as Trout Unlimited, Conservation Districts, etc., to continue these efforts as regards more efficient use of irrigation water.

APPENDIX J - FISH AND WILDLIFE RESOURCES

FISHERIES

The Blackfoot River has a rich history as a trout fishery. This river is home to eleven native fish species and eight non-native fish species. Native fish include: bull trout, westslope cutthroat trout, mountain whitefish, northern squawfish, longnose sucker, largescale sucker, sculpin (2 species), peamouth chub, redside shiner and longnose dace. Non-native fish include: brown trout, brook trout, rainbow trout, Yellowstone cutthroat trout, northern pike, fathead minnow, largemouth bass, and white suckers. Dominant fish species varies from rainbow trout from the mouth to the North Fork of the Blackfoot, brown trout to Lincoln, and westslope cutthroat and brook trout upstream of Lincoln.

The Blackfoot River contains critical habitat for native fish species federally listed under the Endangered Species Act. These species include, bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout. This river is managed as a wild trout fishery which emphasizes natural reproduction of fish and maintenance of habitat suitable for all life history stages in the environment.

The 1976 survey of recreational use of the lower Blackfoot (the area now defined as the Blackfoot River Recreation Corridor) done by FWP showed that over 80% of the recreational users fished sometime during their visit to the river. In 1991, FWP repeated this survey and found a significant change regarding the use of the river. Only 34% of all visitors fished in 1991 and only 15% of floaters fished at some point during their visit. Then in 1994, aerial counts conducted by FWP on the Blackfoot River from Lincoln to the mouth indicated 41% of the river users fished. These numbers are reflective of changes in the numbers and character of recreational users, and to some extent to a reduction and then an increase in numbers of fish in the Blackfoot.

In the late 1980's, public concerns were expressed to FWP about declining catch rates in the Blackfoot. This led to a series of studies of the river which sought to determine just what was happening. The Big Blackfoot Chapter of Trout Unlimited (TU) was organized principally in response to these concerns. The Chapter was very successful in raising funds for studies and physical improvements. The water quality studies discussed earlier were funded in part by TU and TU also assisted FWP in a series of fisheries studies of the Blackfoot and its tributaries. Most notable of the fisheries studies were the 1988 fisheries inventory of the main stem and the 1989 inventory of six major tributaries.

Some of the general conclusions and recommendations from these studies are contained in Appendix E.

These studies demonstrate that the fishery in the Blackfoot and its tributaries is dependent

on many factors. Man can have direct influences on the fishery through his harvest of fish. Nature influences fisheries habitat through such things as precipitation while man influences it through such things as water use, land use, and discharges to the stream. Because of the complexities the maintenance of fishery habitats is challenging. Not only are the physical and chemical characteristics of the water in the stream important, but also the land use practices adjacent to the stream. Land use practices that are good for maintaining soils, vegetation and stream channel stability are also good for the fishery. On Montana's streams, good habitat is cool, clean, clear water flowing through deep pools, steep riffles and log jams. Good stream habitat includes thick sod mats, overhanging trees, large old growth trees that have fallen into stream channels and bushes as well as undercut banks.

Management of the fishery has some limitations in terms of management of the habitat. As has previously been pointed out, other agencies manage water quality while water quantity is subject to a host of other laws and rules as well as the whims of nature. Likewise, land use controls are also vested in other agencies. FWP and the Sponsoring Agencies have some ability to work with and influence both private landowners as well as these other management agencies that deal with elements of the habitat.

Many feel that the Blackfoot is now a showcase for partnerships with landowners. The history of the Blackfoot has numerous examples of cooperation with landowners on fishery projects. Major cooperative efforts began with the Blackfoot River Recreation Corridor in the mid 1970's and have continued with a nationally recognized river basin restoration effort started in 1990 with Trout Unlimited, FWP and with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's Partners for Wildlife Program. These cooperative efforts helps to compensate shortcomings in agency's legal authority in dealing with habitat conservation on private lands. This non-regulatory approach provides capital and professional assistance for implementation of conservation practices beneficial to fish, wildlife, cultural and recreational resources of the valley.

Private landowner's willingness to accept and participate in management changes, Trout Unlimited's support and guidance, and agency financial and personal commitments provide the foundation for this partnership showcase. The valley's cooperative resource management group, The Blackfoot Challenge, has recently facilitated these cooperative programs in order that they can continue and to allow new fishery protection efforts to be established.

Overall, decline in fishery resources observed on the river in the 1980's, appears to have been reversed through management changes and cooperative habitat restoration efforts in the 1990's. Native and non-native fish species populations are projected to significantly increase over the next decade due to the positive impacts of habitat restoration initiatives.

FWP does have principal authority to establish fishing regulations and thereby control the harvest of fish. FWP works within its authority to influence fish habitat, and then establishes regulations which respond to the resulting needs of the fishery. Current fishing regulations conform to the suggested regulations identified in the 1989 fishery inventory contained in Appendix E. The regulations provide for catch and release fishing for Cutthroat Trout and a

limit of three fish under 12 inches for Rainbow and Brown Trout. Fishing for Bull Trout is prohibited. The fishing season in the mainstem also provides for an extended Whitefish season and catch and release fishing for trout from December 1st to the third Saturday in May. As fisheries population inventory work continues, FWP has the ability to tailor the regulations to fit the specific needs of a tributary or a specific reach of the mainstem.

Management Statement for Fisheries-

- FWP will continue to work to implement the Management Objectives identified in the 1988 and 1989 fisheries inventories as listed below:
  *FWP has established fishing regulations in accord with the inventories;
  *Work will continue to improve spawning and rearing habitat and the re-establishment of spawning runs in vacant habitat for native fish species.
  *Population inventory work will continue and the results utilized in periodic review and possible updating of the Management Objectives.

- FWP will continue to act as the advocate for the public as regards activities of other agencies and private landowners which have the potential to impact the fishery or fish habitat.

- FWP will continue to work with landowners where possible to perform fish habitat enhancement projects and to work to solve fish population problems or deficiencies.

- The Sponsoring Agencies who manage lands within the Blackfoot River drainage will continue to work cooperatively with FWP regarding fish habitat on their lands. Several of these agencies have assisted in funding of fisheries work in the past, and by working ` cooperatively the priorities for future work can be identified.

WILDLIFE

The Blackfoot River Valley and the surrounding areas provide abundant and varied habitat for a large number of wildlife species. According to the Montana Natural Heritage Program approximately 19 species of fish, 4 species of amphibians, 230 species of birds, and 50 species of mammals utilize the area for permanent or migratory habitat. The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service has identified 17 of these as either threatened, endangered or sensitive species. Chief among these are the bald eagle, peregrine falcon, harlequin duck, gray wolf and the grizzly bear.

Hunting for white-tailed deer, mule deer and elk is a very significant outdoor activity within the Blackfoot drainage. FWP and the other Sponsoring Agencies address wildlife management extensively in their management plans for the drainage. FWP also manages the Blackfoot-Clearwater Wildlife Management Area located just north of the Clearwater Junction, which

provides winter range for 1,000 elk and 2,000 deer, and the Aunt Molly Wildlife Management Area northwest of Helmville. There are also a number of FWP managed walk-in hunting areas on private and public lands. The U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service manages the Blackfoot Wildlife Production Area near Browns Lake west of Mineral Hill.

Wildlife watching is an activity that has increased significantly along the Blackfoot. The 1976 recreation user survey found that 17.5% of users watched wildlife, while in 1991 that number had risen to 37.7%. Many of the questionnaires submitted as a part of the scoping process for this Plan indicated that seeing wildlife was important to the user and that the presence of wildlife along the river enhanced the Awildness≅ or Anaturalness≅ of the experience.

Management of wildlife in the Blackfoot drainage is somewhat similar to the management of the fishery. A relatively small amount of land is under the direct management of FWP, whereas wildlife are found on virtually all lands in private ownership and public lands administered by the other Sponsoring Agencies. FWP has the ability and the responsibility as the advocate for the public to work to influence the maintenance and the improvement of wildlife habitat. FWP does have the ability to respond to changes in wildlife populations for game species by controlling the harvest of wildlife through hunting regulations. The Sponsoring Agencies who manage public lands have been working cooperatively with FWP in addressing wildlife in their own internal Management Plans for these lands.

Management Statement for Wildlife-

FWP and the Sponsoring Agencies will continue to work cooperatively with land managers and landowners to manage and enhance wildlife populations. Key considerations include:

- Specific waterfowl enhancement programs and waterfowl enhancement as a secondary result of fisheries projects, bald eagle recovery program, osprey use, harlequin duck use, Canada goose use, and walk-in big game hunting areas.

- Adoption of specific wildlife objectives for the Blackfoot.

- Provide Big Game winter range and minimize game-caused damage on private lands.

- Users of the Blackfoot drainage have also indicated interest in a “watchable wildlife” program. There are currently two published watchable wildlife guides for the Blackfoot (Montana Watchable Wildlife Viewing Guide by Hank and Carol Fischer and the Blackfoot Valley Wildlife Viewing Guide by a group of Government Agencies, Corporations, and Private Organizations) and FWP will consider others in the future. Recreation users may be asked to prioritize watchable wildlife sites with other types of facilities as well as indicate preferences for locations of wildlife watchable sites.

- FWP and other agencies will cooperate in seeking conservation easements as a means of protecting wildlife habitat and open space within the corridor.

- FWP will work cooperatively with the U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service and all agencies who has authority in the management of migratory birds and threatened and endangered species.

APPENDIX K - POTENTIAL RECREATION MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

REACH 1 Headwaters to Mineral Hill Area:

Potential Management Actions:

Bureau of Land Management

Mineral Hill Access

A parking area could be designed and developed. The location would be in the general vicinity of the junction of Highway 200 and Highway 141, next to the Highway 141 Bridge. The area could provide parking, toilet, and easy access to river. Parking would be controlled but not limited. Scheduled maintenance would be conducted. Public land/private property boundaries would be identified.

Trapper Flats Access

No future development at this site. Public land/private property boundaries would be identified.

Arrastra Access

Limited parking (i.e., 2-3 vehicles) could be provided. A parking area could be designed and developed. No toilet facilities would be available. Access site would be developed in a manner to render safe access off of Highway 200. Scheduled maintenance would be conducted. Public land/private property boundaries would be identified.

Kershaw Access

Limited parking (i.e., 2-3 vehicles) could be provided. A parking area could be designed and developed. No toilet facilities would be available. Access site would be developed in a manner to render safe access off of Highway 200. Scheduled maintenance would be conducted. Public land/private property boundaries would be identified.

Sauerkraut Creek

Controlled parking/Day-use only could be provided. A site plan would be composed to determine sanitation and safety needs. Scheduled maintenance would be conducted. Public land/private property boundaries would be identified.

Lewis & Clark County and Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Stemple Pass Road Bridge or elsewhere in the Lincoln townsite

Lewis and Clark County and FWP will examine the possibilities of acquiring "designated access" to the river in the bridge area. Such a site could include the following:

- "Limited parking" area
- scheduled maintenance and patrols
- access from parking area to river (i.e., trail, turnstile through fence)

Helena National Forest - Lincoln Ranger District

Moose Creek - Ogden/Nevada Road Access

This site would continue to have scheduled maintenance and repairs as needed. The following improvement could be completed:

- Highway directional signs on Hwy. 200

Aspen Grove

This site would continue scheduled maintenance and repairs as needed. No major improvements would be completed.

REACH 2: Mineral Hill Area to North Fork Confluence

Potential Management Actions:

Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Cedar Meadows FAS and Aunt Molly FAS

These sites would remain as day-use only access sites and would not receive any improvements, except for repairs and scheduled maintenance of existing facilities.

Powell County

Newman Raymond Bridge

The county bridge at river mile 60.0, referred to as the Newman Raymond Bridge will remain as a "non-designated access site." Parking at this site is currently being done on private land owned by the Mannix brothers.

Possible management strategy for this site could include the following:

Phase I: -Allow parking to continue in the small fenced-in area on the northeast corner of bridge, presently provided by the Mannix.
-No signing would be installed (except for "float gate" warning signs).
-It would not be recognized as designated public access parking area (i.e. maps would not label it as such).

*Phase II:-(Would go into effect when the landowners determine the need due to excessive recreational use.)
-Powell County would be petitioned to restrict parking off the county road within a specified distance of the bridge.
-FWP would design and develop a small scale access area.
-FWP would post regulatory signs
-FWP would provide scheduled maintenance and patrols.

*(This Phase could become a cooperative management effort between the Mannix Brothers Ranch, Powell County and FWP, and an agreement would be acquired.)

REACH 3. North Fork Confluence to Russell Gates ("County Line"):

Potential Management Actions:

Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks

River Junction FAS

This site could remain as a designated campground and could receive the listed improvements through stages of increased use:

- Improved existing roadway and a designated floater/day use parking area.
- Upgrade to accessible pre-cast concrete toilet (1).
- Additional campsite(s) (picnic table, fire ring).

Powell County

Scotty Brown Bridge

Public Access could continue to be allowed under the conditions stated in a 1994 agreement between Powell County and landowners who possess property on the four corners of land adjacent to the bridge (Appendix H). Negotiation would be attempted by FWP, Powell County and landowners adjacent to bridge to provide reasonable access to floating recreationists.

REACH 4. Russell Gates to Roundup:

Potential Management Actions:

Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Russell Gates FAS

This site could remain as designated camping and the listed developments could be considered in order to facilitate current use levels:

- develop day-use/boater parking area directly upstream from current campground area (This may be done in cooperation with adjacent landowner, BLM).
- add two more accessible toilets.

Roundup FAS, Sunset Hill FAS and Clearwater Bridge FAS

These sites would remain as day-use only access sites and except for possible sanitation needs will not receive any improvements. Repairs and scheduled maintenance of existing facilities will continue. Limited parking would continue at Sunset Hill and Clearwater Bridge.

Department of Natural Resources & Conservation (DNRC)

Sperry Grade

This site could remain as day-use only access site and would not receive any improvement. This site could be closed to the public when and if DNRC would grant a lease for this land.

Public and commercial use access on all DNRC lands is regulated under the state's School Trust Land Recreational Access Law. (For further information contact local DNRC office).

REACH5. Roundup to Johnsrud Park:

Potential Management Actions:

Bureau of Land Management and Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks

With the implementation of a Cooperative Management Agreement (CMA) these two agencies could administer in cooperative management, the section of river between river mile 13.3 and 24.7. This section of river would receive continuing scheduled maintenance and repairs for existing sites along with the following improvements:

The "Corridor Road," owned by BLM and Missoula County, in 1998 was redesigned and rebuilt in order to accommodate recreational use traffic and occasional logging equipment traffic. This improvement will meet public road safety standards.

The possible relocation of the corridor road around Belmont Creek would be evaluated to determine feasibility and comparability with the recreation use and other management plans. The concept behind a possible relocation of the road and bridge would be to continue adequate passage for the fisheries upstream in Belmont Creek, but at the same time provide a more direct route for recreational traffic traveling between Johnsrud Park and Roundup. The new route would lessen the physical and social impacts on the private landowner property in the lower Belmont area.

Redesigning and development of individual access site's roadway systems could be provided and maintained in the following access sites:

- Daigle's Eddy
- Sheep Flats
- Day-use area at river mile 18.5
- Thibodeau
- Day-use area at river mile 19.3
- Whitaker Bridge
- Belmont Creek

The following sites could remain as day-use only access sites. Besides the previously stated roadway improvements these sites would receive the following improvements:

- Daigle's Eddy: pre-cast concrete, disabled accessible toilet facility
- Sheep Flats: pre-cast concrete, disabled accessible toilet facility
- Whitaker Bridge: pre-cast concrete, disabled accessible toilet facility
- Belmont Creek: pre-cast concrete, disabled accessible toilet facility

The following sites could remain as day-use only access sites, no improvements would be made except for roadway improvements previously stated:

- Day-use area at river mile 18.5
- Day-use area at river mile 19.3
- Red Rock
- Roundup

The following access site could remain as day-use only access site and would receive the listed improvement:

- Day-use area between river mile 22.7 and 24.5: define use area boundaries by posting signs and barrier posts.

The following site could remain as designated campground. Besides the previously stated roadway improvements, the listed development could be considered:

- Thibodeau:
  * Pre-cast concrete, disabled accessible toilets (2)
  * Barrier post and other recreation site boundaries will be defined.

The old Milwaukee Railroad right-of-way located between river mile 13.0 (McNamara Bridge on Hwy. 200) and river mile 24.5 (just downstream from Corrick River Bend) is currently open to the public for non-motorized use. This section of the old railroad could be evaluated to determine the feasibility and suitability for a designated non-motorized use trail. This man-made embankment would allow foot traffic, recreational horse use and bicycles to move freely for approximately 11 miles. The following improvements on the railroad right-of-way could be implemented:

- "walk" bridges over Belmont Creek and Gold Creek
- minor excavation work along the trail where the railroad bed has deteriorated
- signing
- parking area

Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks

The following sites could remain as designated campgrounds and the listed improvements could be considered:

- Corrick River Bend:
  * Pre-cast concrete, disabled accessible toilets (2)

- Ninemile Prairie:
  * Improve roadway
  * Pre-cast concrete, disabled accessible toilet (1)

REACH 6. Johnsrud Park to Bonner:

Potential Management Actions:

Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Marco Flats FAS

This site could remain as a day-use only access site. The following improvements would be considered:

- accessible toilet facility

K. Ross Toole

This site could remain as a day-use only access site and the listed improvements could be considered as recreation use levels increase:

- highway signing
- enlarged parking area with "limited parking."
- no campfires allowed
- maintain and improve trail system from parking area to river bank
- accessible toilet facility

Johnsrud Park

This site could remain as a designated campground and the listed improvements would be considered:

- Seasonal closures (December 1 - April 1)
- Limited camping units allowed

Plum Creek Timber Company

Lands located between river miles 12.8 and 13.3:

Plum Creek Timber Company lands have an open land use policy to the public on all current ownership.

Angevine (River mile 8.9)

Plum Creek Timber Company lands have an open land use policy to the public on all current ownership.

Department of Transportation (DOT)

Wishered Bridge (Highway 200, River Mile 6.7)

Public access at this site would be evaluated.

Department of Transportation (DOT)/Plum Creek Timber Company

Old Weigh Scales Station (River mile 2)

Either through a partnership with FWP, DOT and Plum Creek Timber Company or by the land becoming deeded to FWP, this area could provide a controlled designated parking area and other following improvements:

- A parking area would be designed and developed.
- Recreation area site boundaries would be defined and boundary signs would be installed.
- A designated boat launch/take-out area that would reduce bank erosion.
- Scheduled maintenance and patrols would be provided by FWP and Missoula County.

REACH 6. Johnsrud Park to Bonner:

Potential Management Actions:

Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Marco Flats FAS

This site could remain as a day-use only access site. The following improvements would be considered:

- accessible toilet facility

K. Ross Toole

This site will remain as a day-use only access site and the listed improvements will be considered as recreation use levels increase:

- highway signing
- enlarged parking area with "limited parking."
- no campfires allowed
- maintain and improve trail system from parking area to river bank
- accessible toilet facility

Johnsrud Park

This site could remain as a designated campground and the listed improvements would be considered:

- Seasonal closures (December 1 - April 1)
- Limited camping units allowed

Plum Creek Timber Company

Lands located between river miles 12.8 and 13.3:

Plum Creek Timber Company lands have an open land use policy to the public on all current ownership.

Angevine (River mile 8.9)

Plum Creek Timber Company lands have an open land use policy to the public on all current ownership.

Department of Transportation (DOT)

Wishered Bridge (Highway 200, River Mile 6.7)

Public access at this site would be evaluated

Department of Transportation (DOT)/Plum Creek Timber Company

Old Weigh Scales Station (River mile 2)

Either through a partnership with FWP, DOT and Plum Creek Timber Company or by the land becoming deeded to FWP, this area could provide a controlled designated parking area and other following improvements:

-A parking area would be designed and developed.

-Recreation area site boundaries would be defined and boundary signs would be installed.

- A designated boat launch/take-out area that would reduce bank erosion.

- Scheduled maintenance and patrols would be provided by FWP and Missoula County.

REACH 7. North Fork of the Blackfoot River (North Fork Falls to Confluence with the Main)

Potential Management Actions:

Lolo National Forest - Seeley Lake Ranger District

North Fork of the Blackfoot Trailhead (for the Hobnail Tom Trail, Trail #32):

-There are no plans for this site to receive any improvements, except for repairs and scheduled maintenance of existing facilities.

-There are some conditions that may cause regulatory change in use patterns on Trail #32, the "Hobnail Tom Trail" between the trail head and the North Fork cabin. Trail encounters on this trail exceeding rates established in the Bob Marshall Limits of Acceptable Use Plan could limit the amount of trail use in the future.

-When documented, incidents which cause negative impacts on breeding/nesting Harlequin ducks, designated areas in the river corridor could be closed or limited to public access.

Montana Department of Transportation (MDT)

North Fork Bridge (Highway 200)

- No improvements for parking would be provided. If increase in use levels persist, the option to install a sign which would inform the public of the access available 3.5 river miles downstream at Harry Morgan FAS would be evaluated.

Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Harry Morgan FAS

This site could remain as a designated campground and the listed improvements would be considered:

- Pre-cast concrete, disabled accessible toilet
- Launch site "hardening" (resource protection)
- Entrance road improvements

APPENDIX L - (1999) PUBLIC MEETINGS COMMENTS SUMMARY

(Addressing the DRAFT Management Direction document)

(Attached)

APPENDIX L. (Attachments)

Lincoln Public Meeting

Blackfoot River

1999

1. Why Lander's Fork not included? Spawning value and water quality concerns.

2. Floater's access at Scotty Brown Bridge (SBB). Any decisions?Status of property which old bridge was on?

3. Suggest paper to answer concerns and questions

4. Access alleviates crowding-this is big issue @ SBB.

5. DEQ person on RecSteer Comm: They need input

6. Put document on internet

7. Put on FWP webpage

8. All involved would benefit nom information and education: Distribute more broadly.

9. Wear and tear on fish: Have single barbless hook- Size #4 and smaller.

10. Water quality should be enhanced if possible- not just maintained.

Page 2

11. Access sites: unofficial work good.

12. But problems do exist: landowners and weeds @ unofficial access points. Make money available. Major problem.

13. Use from Lincoln on down: Getting crowded.

14. Weeds are a big problem: Especially to keep access open.

15. Check Page 41: Develop 100' from high water. Is this just a recommendation?

16. Page 41: Powell County Comm has adopted.

17. Access Sites: Where are they? How Many: Official vs. unofficial. List them: County parcels; Bridge accesses. Create access behind airstrip and USFS? No. donation but has possibilities.

18. Attempt to contact landowners as part of process to enhance access?

19. Are user fees appropriate for 0 & M?

20. Permits should or should not become property right if we get there? Needs to be considered.

21. Kids affected by user fees: At head waters there are lots of kids with out $. Consider them. Consider safety hazards @ Stemple Bridge. Parking is a problem too.

Page 3

22. State lands are already paid. DNRC gets those $. Some DNRC on Blackfoot in easement.

23. Does plan address bank stabilization for landowners'.

24. What role does FWP and (RecSteerCom) RSC have in enhancing conservation easements?

25. RSC on commercial use: set cutoff date for historical use. Go back to when process started.

26. When is plan complete?

Missoula Public Meeting

Blackfoot River

1999

1. Increase of access will increase use: If you build it, they will come.
2. Why is Scotty Brown Bridge (SBB) not an access?
3. Please do not make me apply to float.
4. General public under-represented on RecSteerCom (RSC).
5. Subjective nature of RSC judgements on overuse. Fairness? Worried about eroding support.
6. If you do not limit, there will be nothing left to manage. How to do it is the question.
7. Blackfoot will become like Reserve St if we are not careful. Future?
8. Conservation easements along the river.
9. If permits exist, have them non negotiable. Cannot sell permits or days. Permit lasts two years max.
10. Stream access law: can't stop inner-tubes from Johnsrud.

Page 2

11. Smith River and Blackfoot River are different
12. Outfitter: on river 30-40 days. Do not see justification for permit system.
13. No glass bottles in Blackfoot River Recreation Corridor (BRRC)
14. Permit issue is complex.
15. 4 different rivers to guide on: Good deal now with few people.
16. Regulate fisheries, glass bottles and unruly behavior (Johnsrud)
17. Resource degradation at Johnsrud and other FAS: Not keeping with mission statement.
18. Provide better signs that educate more efficiently.
19. Concern: regulating usage based on historic usage should not be rewarded.
20. Some conflicts unseen because people stay away from areas of conflict.
21. Conduct fish mortality study. Excessive manhandling of fish…
22. Plan limits public access to local folks: more limitations risk losing public support needed to preserve Blackfoot.

Page 3

23. Very limited public input thus far regarding mgmt plan.
24. Make all agencies ex-officio on RSC.
25. Take regional view: Bitterroot will get pounded if use is restricted on Blackfoot.
26. Fisheries concerns: Cuttbow, whirling disease, catch and release, barbless hooks. Seems to be a lack of effort by FWP on these issues.
27. 13 people seems to few to justify user fees.
28. Too many agency folks on RSC.
29. Where are Msla and County planners?
30. Too many commercial interests on RSC.
31. Landowners are also over represented on RSC.
32. FWP has not justified use limitations with work so far.
33. Lee and Woody should be ex-officio: not members of RSC.
34. USFS does not need 2 RSC positions.
35. Let the outfitters struggle over who will need to be on RSC.
36. DNRC, BLM: okay

Page 4

37. Should have up to 5 members from general public on RSC.
38. Protect and preserve the resources, fish habitat and the anglers.
39. Create special fish regs for particular sections of the river.
40. Would like to know/see how the selection is done for RSC members.
41. Outfitters are concerned about equitable way to allocate days.
42. Will RSC members be favored.
43. Where do examples of conflicts come from? As a guide, I see very little user conflicts.
44. Limit improvements at FAS. Produce affordable, easy access. Do not need expensive/exclusive (HB 314)
45. FWP should not interfere: pages 9-20, 21, 25, 39, 40-42. Eroding private property rights. Some landowners are concerned.
46. FWP has not done enough to regulate guides: need count of guides; need leg to reg guides; public use first- then guides; need the data- lacking in this document; need public support.
47. Is RSC premature? …. Conduct user studies and other related studies first. Then would have better data to base representation on RSC.

Page 5

48. Weekday use is no problem thus far; but weekend use is crowded.
49. Some folks do not see conflicts today, but we should be managing for the future!
50. Manage for the health of the fisheries relating to the river; then manage for the user.
51. Support exactly what is in the plan: late but good.
52. Provide more access: long stretches bunch folks up. Have access every 5 miles.
53. Emphasize spreading people out rather than limit.
54. Reevaluate BRRC act: infringement on public rights-restrictive.
55. FWP recent study indicates 3% of user days on Bitterroot is commercial.
56. 17 years ago, Blackfoot fishery was no where near today. Outfitters are not the problem.
57. The study should include wildlife resources.
58. The river is a local treasure: we have right to be there. Do not overreact to the use types that are fashionable now.

Page 6

59. I use outfitters. They help more than others regarding education about the resources. Why regulate them.

60. Identify the use and/or users that are damaging the resources, and regulate them.